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PIC donates \$4K worth of toys for Guam's foster kids. **PAGE 5**
300-plus students join MTEC Tourism Summit. **PAGE 6**

\$1

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'Some 200 employees will be let go'

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
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Correspondent

Out of about 500 American Rescue Plan Act-funded and excepted service government hires, around 200 workers combined from both ARPA-funded and limited-term hires will be receiving their 60-day termination notices as

early as this Thursday, leaving a combined remainder of about 300 employees.

This was learned yesterday at the presentation of Joseph Pangelinan, who is the chief of Employee Development and Staffing at the Office of Personal Management, at the Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

During the latter part of his presentation on OPM's functions and services, he was asked if government employees are expected to experience furloughs or cuts in their hours in the months ahead. His reply:

See **ROTARY** on Page 4

Sablan resigns from CEDA, GCEA



Sablan

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Michael S. Sablan has handed in his courtesy resignation from his post in the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority's board of directors and from the Governor's

See **SABLAN** on Page 4



MANGO leads other SCC 2022 awardees

By **MARK RABAGO**
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Jay Santos wasn't the only winner during the 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall, as the Saipan Chamber of Commerce also hailed four

See **MANGO** on Page 4

MARK RABAGO

The Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations, or MANGO, was named the 2022 Chamber Member of the Year by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce during its 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

See photo gallery on Page 7



Palacios



Apatang

'ARPA-funded excepted service contract employees must get termination notices'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

All American Rescue Plan Act-funded excepted service contract employees are expected to receive 60-day notices

of termination before this Friday.

In a memorandum on Monday addressed to department and activity heads, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang asked them to review their structures to de-

termine which services are absolutely necessary.

They said all personnel deemed essential must identify alternative funding sources, outside of local resources, for their continued employment, along

with justifications as to why their positions should be retained.

Palacios and Apatang did not indicate how many ARPA-funded excepted service contracts employees must

See **TERMINATION** on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Atkins Kroll donated \$1,914 to Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam & CNMI last Friday, Jan. 20.

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NATION

U.S. health officials want to make COVID-19 vaccinations more like the annual flu shot.

PAGE 12



LIFE & STYLE

A New York City police officer is seen filming those filing out from a Drake concert, raising concerns.

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GOT A NEWS TIP?

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com



Local

TOURISM SUMMIT

More than 300 students and advisers of school tourism clubs listen to speakers at the Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit at Kensington Hotel Saipan last Jan. 19 in an event that was co-organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority. **Story and more photos on Page 6**

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

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NMI students make OSU Honor Roll

CORVALLIS, Ore.—Five students from the CNMI have made it to the Fall 2022 Scholastic Honor Roll of the Oregon State University.

The students from the CNMI are Aaron Paul G. Cayading, a freshman taking up Psychology; Robert Lawrence B. Deleon Guerrero, a senior student of Agricultural Sciences; Nicole Kim, a junior Psychology major; Erica Jonette C. Leon Guerrero, a junior taking up Environmental Sciences; and Leagine Francia D. Mendiola, a junior student majoring in Business Information Systems.

A total of 12,220 students at the university earned a B-plus (3.5) or better to make the listing. To be on the honor roll, students must carry at least six graded hours of course work.

Oregon State University is one of only three land, sea, space and sun grant universities in the nation. It has more than 35,000 students from across the globe. **(PR)**



Newly elected SNILD chair vows to do best in leading delegation

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Newly elected Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation chair Rep. John Paul Sablan (Ind-Saipan) vowed Friday to use his institutional knowledge in leading the SNILD in the next two years.

Rep. Roman Benavente (Ind-Saipan) was also elected vice chairman, while Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) was elected floor leader at the same SNILD organizational session.

Sablan said there are many works and challenges ahead of them so they must work harmoniously for the common good of the people of the Third Senatorial District—the political name of Saipan and the Northern Islands.

“We must continue to assist our municipalities, the Office of Mayor of Saipan, and the Office of the Northern islands, as well as our municipal council,” he said.

The SNILD chairman said they must continue to assist community programs within their precincts and villages to improve the



Sablan

livelihood of the people.

He said they must continue to support funding for the Saipan scholarship program, called Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance program.

“We must also set our priorities within our precinct district projects to improve the infrastructure of the villages,” Sablan said.

He said it is with great honor that he extends his sincere gratitude to all of his colleagues for their trust and confidence in him to serve as chairman for the 23rd SNILD.

USCIS extends Green Card validity for some conditional residents

2 more NMC students pass teaching exam Praxis II



Ligaya



Metran

Northern Marianas College education majors Annel Ligaya and Jonas Metran recently joined the long list of NMC students who passed the Praxis II exam. The Praxis II assesses an educator's knowledge in a specific subject area or grade level that they will be teaching.

"We congratulate Annel and Jonas and wish them the best of luck on their journey to become educators," said NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D.

Students enrolled in NMC's education program are required to pass the Praxis II before completing the program. Education majors with a focus in Early Childhood Education must pass the Praxis II Education of Young Children exam, while those with a focus in Rehabilitation & Human Services must pass the Praxis II Professional School Counselor exam.

In addition, education majors with a concentration in Special Education must pass the Praxis II Special Education: CK and Applications exam, and students with a concentration in Elementary Education must pass the Elementary Education Content Knowledge exam.

"Annel and Jonas are exemplary students and I have no doubt that they will soon become excellent educators in our Commonwealth," NMC School of Education director Roland Merar said.

Ligaya, an Early Childhood Education major, said her primary motivation for pursuing a bachelor's degree in education is to help create a better and brighter future for the Commonwealth.

"I hope to educate children to be environmentally conscious, passionate, kind, and hardworking individuals who may someday make positive and impactful contributions to the CNMI community," Ligaya said.

According to Ligaya, NMC played a key role in her preparation for the Praxis II exam.

She also attributes her success to her family and friends, as they motivated her to continue studying and preparing for the exam.

After graduating from NMC, Ligaya hopes to work for the CNMI Public School System's Head Start Program.

Metran, who is an Elementary Education major, said he wants to become an educator so that he can make a positive impact on students' lives.

"I want to encourage students to look forward to learning, both academically and in their day-to-day lives," Metran said.

Like Ligaya, Metran also acknowledged that the college helped him with his test preparation as he was able to avail of free Praxis prep courses.

His plan after finishing his studies at NMC is to teach in any of the schools on Saipan.

For more information on NMC's education program, visit www.marianas.edu. (NMC)

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is extending the validity of Permanent Resident Cards—also known as Green Cards—for petitioners who properly file Form I-751, Petition to Remove Conditions on

Residence, or Form I-829, Petition by Investor to Remove Conditions on Permanent Resident Status for 48 months beyond the card's expiration date.

This change started on Jan. 11, 2023, for Form I-829 and

will start on Jan. 25, 2023, for Form I-751.

In statement yesterday, USCIS said it is making this change to accommodate current processing times for Form I-751 and Form I-829, which have increased over

the past year.

USCIS has updated the language on Form I-751 and Form I-829 receipt notices to extend the validity of a Green Card for 48 months for individuals with a newly filed Form I-751 or Form I-829.

"We will issue new receipt notices to eligible conditional permanent residents who previously received notices with an extension shorter than 48 months and whose cases are still pending. These receipt notices can be presented with an expired Green Card as evidence of continued status, while the case remains pending with USCIS.

"By presenting your updated receipt notice with your expired Green Card, you remain authorized to work and travel for 48 months from the expiration date on the front of your expired Green Card," the news release added.

As a reminder, conditional permanent residents who plan to be outside of the United States for a year or more should apply for a re-entry permit by filing Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, before leaving the United States. For more information, see the USCIS' International Travel as a Permanent Resident webpage. (PR)

Select asylum applicants seeking employment authorization can now file Form I-765 online

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced yesterday that certain asylum applicants can now file Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, online. This is an important step in USCIS' efforts to employ technical solutions to streamline and improve processing efficiency and reduce wait times.

Effective immediately, applicants for employment authorization under category (c)(8), Pending Asylum and Withholding of Removal Applicants and Applicants for Pending Asylum under the ABC Settlement Agreement, may file Form I-765 online.

To apply for an Employment Authorization Document based on your pending asylum application under the (c)(8) eligibility category, you may file Form I-765 150 days after you file your asylum application. Please see the Form I-765 instructions for more information.

USCIS is currently experiencing delays in issuing receipts for Form I-589, Application for Asylum

and for Withholding of Removal. Due to these delays, you may not receive a receipt notice in a timely manner after you properly file your Form I-589. For purposes of EAD eligibility based on a pending asylum application, your filing date will be the date that we received your properly filed Form I-589.

To file Form I-765 online, you must first visit my.uscis.gov and create a USCIS online account. There is no cost to create an account. A USCIS account offers a variety of features, including the ability to communicate with USCIS about your application, through a secure inbox. If you have previously filed a USCIS form online, you may use an existing USCIS online account.

Only certain categories of applicants may file Form I-765 online. If you submit Form I-765 online, but you are not filing under an eligible employment authorization category, USCIS may deny your application without refunding the fee.

To find more information about which employment authorization categories are eligible for online filing, visit our Forms Available to File Online page.

Online filing allows applicants to submit forms electronically, check the status of their case online, and receive online notices from USCIS. We will continue to expand online filing of Form I-765 to additional categories to make the process of applying for immigration benefits more efficient, secure, and convenient for more applicants and to increase our operational efficiencies.

USCIS is committed to using innovation, technological solutions, and efficiencies to reduce processing times and meet the needs of all applicants and petitioners. Applicants who file a paper Form I-765, or any other USCIS form, can still create an online account to track the status of their form throughout the adjudication process, even if they did not file the form online. (USCIS)



SAIPAN HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Saipan

NOTICE OF REGULAR SHEFA BOARD MEETING

In accordance with 1 CMC § 9901 et seq., as amended, the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance (SHEFA) Board is hereby giving notice of its regular board meeting, to be held on January 26, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., Office of SHEFA conference room, 2nd Floor, CTC Building, Oleai, Beach Road, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Preliminary Matters
 1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Adoption of Agenda
 4. Adoption of Minutes from November 23rd, 2022
- II. Public Comment(s)
- III. Committee Reports
 - a. Committee on Awards
 - b. Committee on Appeal/Deferments/Forbearance
 - c. Committee on Policy and Procedures
 - d. Committee on Program and Development
 - e. Committee of Fiscal, Legislative, and Community Affairs
- IV. Administrator's Report
- V. Chairman's Report
- VI. Old Business
 1. Proposal to increase the grant-in-aid for on-island and online recipients the match the award of off-island recipients
 2. Discussion to temporarily suspend awards for advanced degrees
 3. Proposal to extend the financial assistance to 3 years for recipients pursuing an associate's degree within the healthcare field
 4. HLB 22-41 (SHEFA appropriation for 2022/2023 update)
- VII. New Business
 1. Winter/Spring 2023 application status
 2. Discussion - Request for scholarship funding for Cultural Maritime Training Center)
- VIII. Executive Session
- IX. Miscellaneous Matters
- X. Next Meeting
- XI. Adjournment

/s/ Oscar M. Babauta,
Chairman, Board of SHEFA Directors

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Spay, neuter clinic starts; boonie dogs fly out



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Calvin Borja, Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter staff; Yumi Brundidge, vet tech; Elizabeth Snodgrass, RN, Emily Hurtt, Simion Nepayo, SMO Dog Shelter staff; Derek Deleon Guerrero, SMO Dog Shelter staff; and Alison Hadley, executive director of GAIN, pose for a photo during the first day of the spay/neuter clinic yesterday at the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter in As Perdido.

By LEIHIJ GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
Reporter

The spay and neuter clinic that set up shop at the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter in As Perdido started yesterday. The day before that, on Monday, boonie dogs left Saipan and are in transit to their new homes off island.

The collaborative efforts of Boonie Babies Saipan, Guam Animals In Need, or GAIN, and the Office of the Mayor of Saipan made it possible for the clinic to be up once again—which has now been extended until this Friday, Jan. 27, for half day of services.

Although they are not taking in anymore pets for services as all slots have been filled, Lauren Cabrera, co-founder of the Boonie Flight Project in Guam and a volunteer clinic coordinator, encourages people to sign up for the waitlist at www.tinyurl.com/booniebabies for the next time a clinic is set up.

In a tour of the clinic at the Dog Shelter yesterday, Cabrera said their team of about 15 volunteer veterinarians and assistants, along with about four SMO Dog Control Program staff, managed to sterilize 12 dogs and seven cats and are aiming to sterilize at least 20 a day until Friday.

Along with the sterilizing

services, they also offer vaccines, rabies vaccines, and microchipping for a fee.

Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan) was seen picking up his dog, Isa, at the clinic, and said he is grateful for the efforts of Cabrera, GAIN, and the Mayor's Office.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

Bill that allocates \$344K for Tinian is vetoed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE

ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Citing insufficient funds, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios has vetoed a local bill that seeks to appropriate \$344,000 from revenues collected from poker fees in the Second Senatorial District, or Tinian and Aguiguan.

Palacios informed Tinian and Aguiguan Legislative Delegation chair Sen. Karl R. King-Nabors (R-Tinian) and House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) last Friday that he vetoed House Local Bill 22-44, D1.

The purpose of the bill is to appropriate \$344,000 from revenues collected from poker fees on Tinian, saying the acting Finance secretary prepared the certification of funds on Dec. 16, 2022.

The governor said that the Department of Finance has informed him that, as of Jan.

20, 2023, funds collected from poker fees on Tinian are insufficient to cover the appropriation set forth in the bill.

"Due to the insufficiency of funds, I must respectfully exercise my constitutional authority to veto this bill," Palacios told King-Nabors and Villagomez in the letter that the Senate clerk received yesterday.

Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas (R-Tinian) introduced the legislation on Dec. 22, 2022. The Tinian and Aguiguan Legislative Delegation passed the bill on Jan. 3, 2023.

The bill seeks to allocate \$281,500 to the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan for personnel and operations; \$50,000 to the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan's discretionary account; \$7,500 to the Tinian Municipal Scholarship pursuant to Tinian Local Law 20-16; and \$5,000 to the Tinian Athletics Sports Association for operations.

MANGO

From page 1

other groups for their exemplary services in the past year.

Preceding Triple J Five Star Wholesale and Triple J Truckload Store general manager on stage to accept their awards were Chamber Member of the Year awardee Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations, Chamber Small Business of the Year awardee Paradise Dental Spa, Chamber Non-Profit of the Year awardee Kagman Isla Community Health Center, and Chamber Start-up of the Year awardee Bistrot Boyz 670.

MANGO is the umbrella organization of non-governmental organizations in the CNMI, which are described as under-

dogs and often silent partners in the CNMI's economy.

As a recognized regional role model, MANGO's members benefit from industry experts making growth possible and increasing NGO success and sustainability. In their collective success, MANGO and its members are committed to seeing public-private partnerships elevated to increase overall economic health.

MANGO executive director Frances Sablan dedicated the Chamber award to their current board: chair Felicidad Ogumoro and members Margaret Aldan, Annale Torres, and Mona Mangloña Jacobs, as well as founding and past board of directors "who kept the MANGO torch going for over 10 years."

She also extended her ku-

dos to what she describes as the MANGO Dream Team—Emma Perez, Franco Santos, Laurie Peterka, Shawna Babauta, Angelika Narvaez, Devine Pua, and Shawn Davis—and to MANGO's former project director Ryan Camacho and staff "who each contributed to the success of our umbrella organization and active participation in the Saipan Chamber of Commerce meetings and activities."

Newly minted Chamber Small Business of the Year awardee Paradise Dental Spa is one of six private dental offices on Saipan.

Established in 2015 and a Chamber since then, Paradise Dental Spa also does a lot to reach out to the community, like beach cleanups, booths at health fairs, and bringing

the sport of pickleball to the island. Its management is also committed to providing ongoing professional development for all of its employees.

In a social media post, Paradise Dental Spa said, "We are beyond thankful, humbled, and delighted to win the Saipan Chamber of Commerce 2022 Small Business of the Year award. We believe our team is beyond incredible, and we're elated others see their greatness too! We give thanks to our team for being the breath and life of who we are and thanks to our dedicated, inspiring leaders Ivan [Ilmov], Dr. [Nelson] Krum, and Dental Donna [Krum]."

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

SABLAN

From page 1

Council of Economic Advisers.

Sablan said yesterday that his resignation from both CEDA and GCEA happened two weeks ago was of his own volition, out of courtesy to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios.

Palacios issued a memorandum last Thursday, Jan. 19, asking all members of boards and commissions who were

politically appointed by the previous Torres administration to resign to pave the way for the appointment of new board and commission members.

Sablan submitted his separate courtesy resignation letters to Palacios last Jan. 13. He said it has been an honor and privilege to have had this opportunity to serve the people of the Commonwealth as a member of the CEDA board and GCEA.

Sablan's resignation from

CEDA and GCEA will take effect this Friday.

In 2020, then-governor Ralph DLG Torres appointed Sablan as a CEDA board member and was subsequently confirmed by the Senate for a term that will expire on Sept. 25, 2024. In May 2020, Torres also appointed Sablan as a member of GCEA.

Sablan said if Palacios sees it appropriate that he remains on the CEDA board and GCEA or that he be consid-

ered to serve the public in another capacity, it would be an honor to serve under his and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang's leadership.

He congratulated Palacios and Apatang for their election and wished them and the new administration much success ahead, "as I do as well for the rest of the government."

Sablan is a former CNMI's Public Auditor. He is currently vice president of Triple J. Enterprises Inc.

in services.

They said that, upon entering office, it has been learned that the CNMI government's current financial resources may not be sufficient to support the current size of government operations.

"Thus, a comprehensive assessment of all programs and services is needed to ensure their sustainability due to funding constraints," Palacios and Apatang said.

ROTARY

From page 1

"What I'm hearing is that the government has been operating at this level and they need to bring it down...and it may prompt a reduction in work hours, terminations for excepted services. I believe before Jan. 27 memos are going out now to employees that are on ARPA limited-term [contracts and] ARPA excepted service employees, so they're going to be receiving a 60-day notice for them to vacate the position. ... We are in a very sad state now in terms of employment in the government. Eventually those employees will be laid off."

When asked for an estimate on how many government workers are expected to be given termination notices by Jan. 27, 2022, he replied, "[The] exact number I don't know, because I just received this information this morning. We had a meeting with the director. The letters are starting to go out, I think it's already out. And what I've learned from the past is that these letters are for the excepted-service ARPA employees...because we do have...limited-term ARPA employees and we also have excepted service ARPA employees. And [for] the excepted service, the 60-day notice has

already been sent out by the director, and [for] the limited term, the director is putting together the memo, or the letter, to make sure that the language is in line with the attorney general's recommendation."

When asked if the letter for ARPA and LTA employees is a termination letter, Pangelinan responded "Yeah, but the language is a little bit different, and maybe the time frame is also a little bit different. They may be looking at resorting to the reduction-in-force because they are in a department."

As for excepted service employees, Pangelinan believes that these individuals may have already received their 60-day notices.

When asked for an estimated number of individuals—both ARPA and excepted-service employees—who may be retained, Pangelinan stated, the remaining ARPA-funded employees will number about 300 ("I want to be conservative.") He said there were about 500 of these employees at the start, "so the remaining is maybe like 300. But that 300 is divided between the excepted service and the limited term."

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

TERMINATION

From page 1

get termination notices.

Speaking at a news briefing early this month, transition committee chair Claudio K. Norita disclosed that nearly 500 CNMI government employees who were employed using ARPA funds have been instructed not to return to work following the

expiration of their contracts last Dec. 31, 2022.

Norita said the employees whose ARPA-funded contracts expired have received guidance from the Office of Personnel Management that instructed them to not return to work after Dec. 31, 2022.

According to OPM's Citizen-Centric Report for Fiscal Year 2022, ARPA continued to play a vital role in the CNMI's workforce, generating

well over 500 jobs in the Executive Branch alone.

In their memorandum on Monday, Palacios and Apatang said they are taking all the necessary steps to ensure that available funds are used responsibly and sustainably for the sake of providing essential services to the public, in line with the administration's dedication to restoring trust, confidence, and efficiency

PIC donates \$4K worth of toys for Guam's foster kids

TUMON, Guam—As part of the Pacific Islands Club Guam's Christmas Celebration, PIC employees collected and contributed \$4,000 worth of toys for a special holiday delivery to Harvest House on Dec. 15, 2022.

The PIC team donated Mega Blox sets, sandbox playsets, Star Wars plush toys, bath and swim toys, and infant toys to support the nonprofit's 13th Annual Christmas Celebration.

"This year for Harvest House's 13th annual Christmas Celebration for Guam's foster children and families, we hosted 'A Christmas Morning.' At this event, we provided over 3,000 Christmas gifts and a delicious pancake and waffle breakfast. Nearly 300 foster children and their families attended this event," said Ashley Lemley, Harvest House Resource coordinator. "We wanted to

share our genuine appreciation to [PIC] for donating floaties, toys, and gifts for our Christmas celebration. Because of their generosity, we were able to abundantly bless the families and children that attended and have continually been able to give out gifts to families who were unable to attend the event."

Ben Ferguson, general manager of PIC Guam said, "Our team wanted to celebrate the holidays by giving to those who could use some Christmas cheer. We are proud to support Harvest House, an organization that helps make the lives of Guam's foster children a lot brighter. Every child deserves to experience joy at Christmas time and year-round. We encourage our community to consider supporting this wonderful organization any time of the year."

PIC Guam also supported the Kate Thomas Foundation

last month with an additional \$4,000 donation of toys in time to deliver presents to Guam's foster children for the holidays.

Harvest House is a ministry for foster children and families in Guam that provides for their physical needs, spiritual encouragement, and emotional support. For more information about how your company or organization can donate to Harvest House, visit harvest-houseguam.org.

PIC Guam is the largest hotel property in Guam. It opened in 1980 and includes 777 guestrooms, seven food and beverage outlets, an amphitheater, a swim-thru aquarium, and a 10-acre waterpark. PIC is owned and operated by P.H.R. Ken Micronesia, Inc. For more information, visit www.pic-resorts.com/guam or call 671-646-9171. (PIC)



In support of Harvest House's 13th Annual Christmas Celebration, Pacific Islands Club Guam delivered \$4,000 in toy donations on Dec. 15, 2022 to support the donation drive. From left, Yvonne P. Mansapit, PIC Guam events manager; Ashley Lemley, Harvest House resource coordinator; and Isabel Hu, PIC Guam director of marketing and brand development.

PIC



Marianas Variety recently donated \$5,000 worth of print and online advertisements to the Northern Marianas College to help promote its upcoming Golf Open in March.

NMC

Marianas Variety donates \$5K to NMC Foundation

Marianas Variety News and Views, a longtime supporter of higher education in the CNMI, has donated \$5,000 in advertising support to help the Northern Marianas College Foundation promote its upcoming Golf Open in March.

"*Marianas Variety* has always been an ardent supporter of the NMC Foundation and its mission to enhance higher education in the CNMI," *Marianas Variety* publisher Amier Younis said. "We are proud to support their upcoming Golf Open once again and we wish all the players the best of luck."

For the first time, NMC's tournament will be a two-day event and will be held on

March 18 and 19, 2023, on the east and west courses of the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort. The tournament fee for the 2023 golf open is \$250.

"The advertising support that *Marianas Variety* gives us for our golf tournaments is one of the reasons why we always have such an impressive turnout," NMC Foundation chair Ben Babauta said. "We thank *Marianas Variety* for their contribution."

The tournament, which is the signature event of the NMC Foundation, aims to raise funds for the college for its rebuilding and reconstruction efforts. In the wake of the devastation and destruction of Super Typhoon

Soudelor and Yutu, the college has been aggressively seeking funds from all available sources to rebuild classrooms, offices, laboratories, and workforce spaces for the CNMI community. The foundation is seeking the CNMI private sector's support through fundraising events like the golf tournament.

Interested companies and individuals who would like to help the college with its rebuilding efforts can donate educational tax credit, cash, or in-kind contributions by visiting www.marianas.edu/golf or by contacting NMC Foundation coordinator Carla Sablan at carla.sablan@marianas.edu or (670) 237-6780. (NMC)

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Pursuant to P. L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Board of Professional Licensing (BPL) hereby give notice that it will hold its quarterly board meeting on **Thursday, January 26, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the BPL-HCPLB Conference Room, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (12/07/2022)
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Chairperson's Report
 - Board Resignations
 - Vacancy on the Board – Rota Representative (Public)
 - 2023 NCARB Regional Summit – Honolulu, HI – (03/02-4/2023)
 - NCARB Visit to Saipan
- VII. Director's Report
 - 2023 BPL National Councils Meeting Schedule
 - 2023 NCEES Zone Interim Meeting – Houston, TX – (04/27-29/2023)
- VIII. Investigator's Report
- IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
 - A. Governor's Office
 - MEMO – Board Resignation
 - B. Legislature
- X. Old Business
 - A. Proposed Regulations for Real Property Appraiser - For Board Approval
 - B. Proposed Local Examination for Real Property Appraiser - For Board Approval
- XI. New Business
 - A. Federal Law – Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act
 - B. Election of Officers
- XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
 - A. New Application
 - B. Renewal Applications
- XIII. Miscellaneous Business
- XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- XV. Announcements
 - A. Next Meeting Date
 - B. Adjournment of Meeting

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
 Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

NMHC JVA NO.	Positions:	Salary:	Opening Date	Closing Date
2023-007	CDBG-DR Loan Specialist (1-Position)	UNGRADED \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00 Per annum	January 17, 2023	February 1, 2023 4:00 PM
2023-008	CDBG-DR Compliance Specialist (1-Position)	UNGRADED \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00 Per annum	January 17, 2023	February 1, 2023 4:00 PM

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information can be accessed at www.nmhcgov.net and www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com.

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; the CDBG-DR Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Ladera Building, Chalan Lallau, Beach Road; or email application and documents to officemanager@nmhcgov.net.

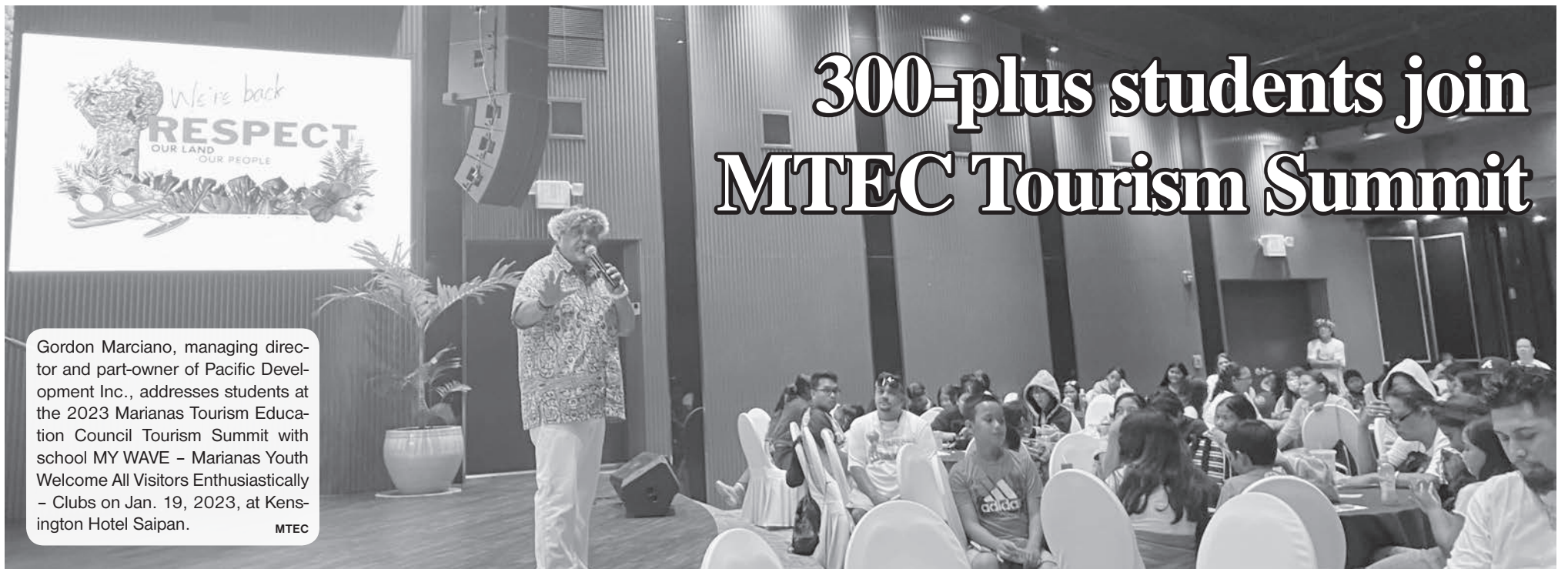
All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447 or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net. NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
Zenie P. Mafnas
 Acting-Corporate Director

300-plus students join MTEC Tourism Summit



Gordon Marciano, managing director and part-owner of Pacific Development Inc., addresses students at the 2023 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE – Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically – Clubs on Jan. 19, 2023, at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

MTEC

More than 300 students and advisers of school tourism clubs joined the Jan. 19 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit at Kensington Hotel Saipan for a day of learning focused on the Marianas' primary economic driver, tourism.

Members of the schools' MY WAVE—Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically—Clubs in grades 3-12 convened for the day's event, co-organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority.

The theme of this year's summit was, "We're Back with Respect! Our People, Our Land, Our Guests," reflecting the resumption of the Marianas tourism industry and the value of respect among the people of the Marianas, which includes respect for natural resources and visitors.

Guest speaker Dr. Bobby Cruz, State Education Agency director for Public School System Mental Health, issued a call to the young leaders titled "Tourism: Bringing the Magic Back," challenging them to become aware of and help promote the unique qualities of the Marianas, including its indigenous cultures, the warmth of the community, and its peaceful, natural beauty.

Kuen-Hee Han, managing director of 500 Sails, introduced students to the goal of the organization to revive the indigenous maritime traditions of the Marianas.

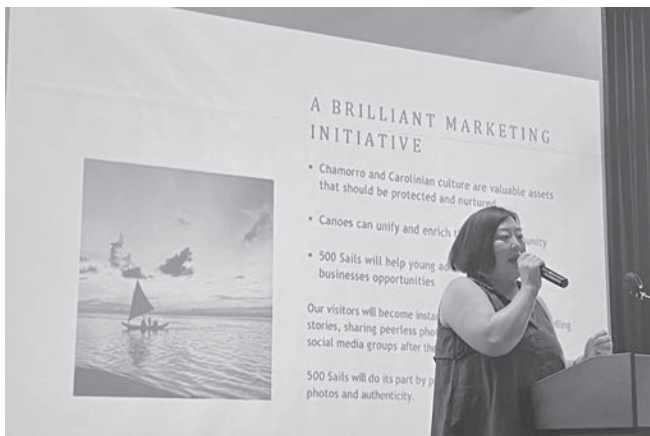
Gordon Marciano, managing director and part-owner of tour company Pacific Development Inc., tied into the summit's theme by encouraging students to connect with visitors and to maintain a positive attitude while extending island hospitality.

"We asked the students for two things: to listen carefully to the guest speakers and have fun learning about our tourism industry," said MTEC acting chairwoman Vicky Benavente.



Dr. Bobby Cruz, State Education Agency director for Public School System Mental Health, addresses students at the 2023 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE – Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically – Clubs on Jan. 19, 2023, at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

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Kuen-Hee Han, managing director of 500 Sails, addresses students at the 2023 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE – Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically – Clubs on Jan. 19, 2023, at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

MTEC



Students of Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary Schools share about their club at the 2023 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE – Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically – Clubs on Jan. 19, 2023, at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

MTEC



Marianas Visitors Authority marketing specialists Skye Seo and Brenda Repeki, third and second right, share about the office's work at the 2023 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE – Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically – Clubs on Jan. 19, 2023, at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

MTEC



Archie Ajoste of the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History & Culture shares at the 2023 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE – Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically – Clubs on Jan. 19, 2023, at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

MTEC

Clubs also presented on their accomplished activities and upcoming plans. Participating schools were Tinian Jr./Sr. High School, Garapan Elementary, Kagman Elementary, San Vicente Elementary, Koblerville Elementary, Oleai Elementary, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary, William S. Reyes Elementary, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, Admiral Gilbert Hopwood Middle School, Tanapag Middle School, Da'ok Academy, Chacha Oceanview Middle School, Marianas High School, Saipan Southern High, Kagman High, and Dandan Middle School.



Summit chair Larry Lee gives closing remarks at the 2023 Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE – Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically – Clubs on Jan. 19, 2023, at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

MTEC

The summit also featured educational exhibits by the MVA, Northern Marianas Technical Institute, Northern Marianas Humanities Council, Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History & Culture, CNMI Public School System, 500 Sails, Coastal Resources Management, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, and Mariana Islands Nature Alliance.

MTEC's outreach activities this school year are supported by the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands and the MVA.

The event was also attended by House Speaker Edmund Villagomez, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, MVA acting managing director Judy C. Torres, and Northern Marianas College president and MTEC board member Dr. Galvin Guerrero.

Other MTEC board members are Martin Duenas (Marianas Visitors Authority), Larry Lee, Naomi Nishimura (CNMI Public School System), Marciano (PDI), Catherine Perry (Integrity Communications), and Glenn Policare (Kanoa Resort).

For more information on MTEC, contact MVA community projects specialist Jack Aranda at jaranda@my-marianas.com. (MTEC)

SCC's 'Bowties & Diamonds' Gala



Paradise Dental Spa was named 2022 Small Business of the Year by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce during its 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

MARK RABAGO



Bistro Boys 670 was named 2022 Start-up of the Year by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce during its 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

MARK RABAGO



Kagman Isla Community Health Center was named Non-Profit of the Year by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce during its 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

MARK RABAGO



Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo swears in the new officers of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce during its 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

MARK RABAGO

Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Joe Guerrero delivers his address at the 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

MARK RABAGO



The newly sworn in officers of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce pose for a picture at the 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

MARK RABAGO

Triple J Five Star Wholesale and Triple J Truckload Store general manager Jay Santos, center, accepts the 2022 Businessperson of the Year award surrounded by past winners during the 2022 "Bowties & Diamonds" Business Person of the Year annual fundraiser gala last Saturday night at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

MARK RABAGO

Opinion

Hafa Adai! Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 17

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Monterey Park shooting is horrific, but all too familiar

“Who walks into a dance hall and guns down 20 people?” Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna asked, hours after 10 people were shot dead and at least 10 more were wounded Saturday night in Monterey Park.

Millions ask the same kind of question after what has become a sickeningly frequent occurrence in America. The slaughter amid Lunar New Year festivities was the fifth mass murder shooting in the U.S. in 2023, which is barely three weeks old. Who did this?

At a Sunday evening news conference, Luna said a suspect named Huu Can Tran was found dead in a van of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. A magazine-fed assault pistol was recovered.

In coming days, more details will doubtless emerge about the suspect and victims of this heinous crime.

But beyond this latest horrific shooting and its particular perpetrator, driven by unique, unfathomable motives, is there a pattern we can discern?

No single answer covers all mass killings. Past perpetrators have included the psychotic, domestic abusers, bigots, conspiracy theorists, holders of personal grudges and international terrorists. They are sometimes young, sometimes in their prime, sometimes elderly. They do their cruel, murderous work at dance halls, elementary schools, universities, movie theaters, concerts, grocery stores, houses of worship, parades.

There is no common profile of the killers, but they have one thing in common: They have guns.

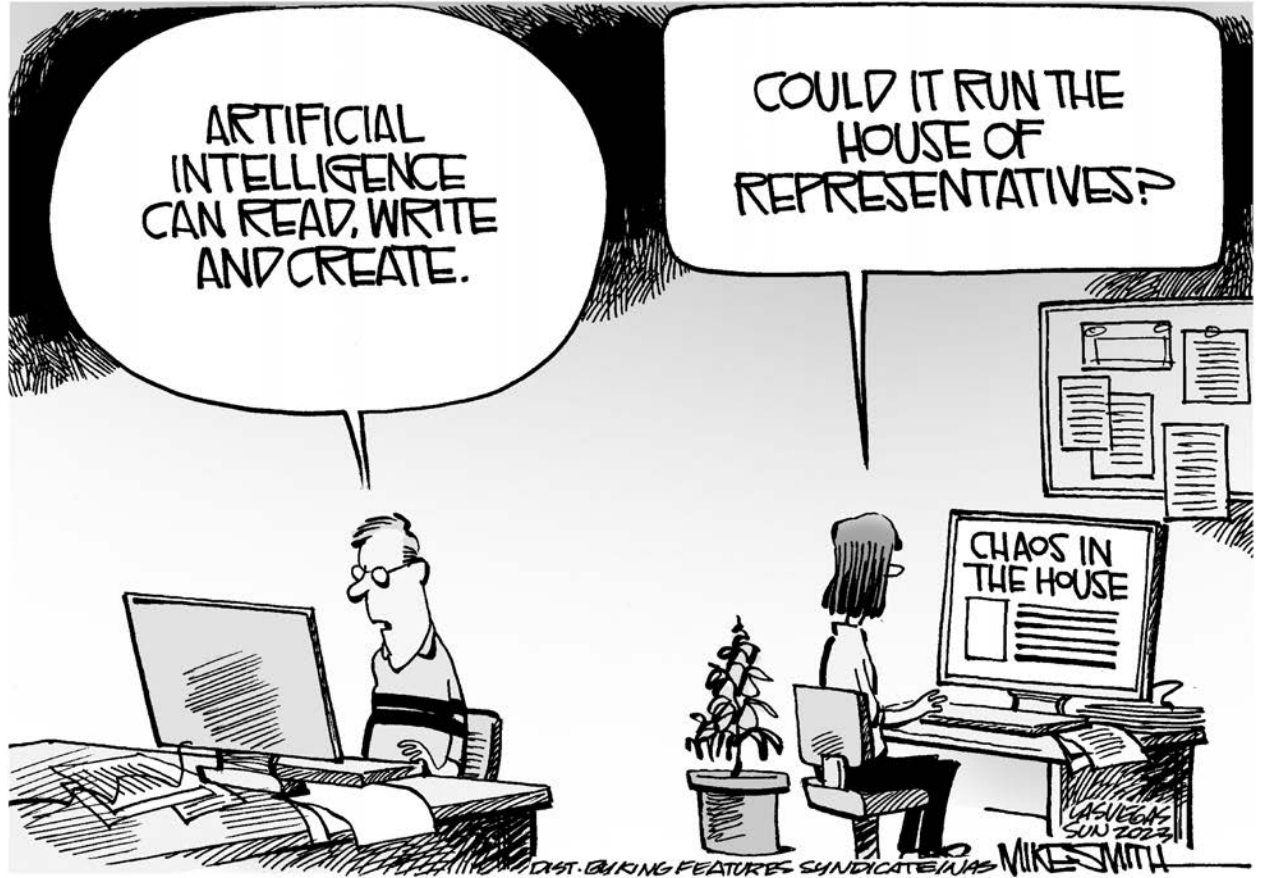
And in one way or another, we hand them their weapons. The United States is the only society with such a powerful gun lobby. That lobby and the manufacturers who profit from the sale of millions of weapons systematically injected right-wing politics with an ideology that equates gun proliferation with liberty, and even modest, commonsense controls with government oppression.

The results include a Congress that for years blocked tabulation of data establishing the reverse link between gun possession and safety, and a Supreme Court that interprets language describing well-regulated militias—drafted when single-fire, muzzle-loaded muskets were the norm—as a constitutional right to acquire weapons, load them and carry them inside any of the places that have been forever scarred by multiple killings.

The gun lobby's evil genius is so profound that it has convinced millions of Americans that the only way to defend themselves against all the violence perpetrated by a populace with too many guns is to acquire more guns. And the only way to live with this odd version of freedom is to ensure that every school, store, church and party could at any moment become shooting galleries.

But national suicide is not the compulsory price of free-

See MONTEREY on Next Page



Every tenant, regardless of immigration status, deserves safe and decent housing

Last year, many states ended pandemic-era assistance programs including programs protecting tenants, leaving renters facing an uncertain future.

Latinos, who were among the hardest hit by COVID-19, are sure to be disproportionately affected by the affordable housing shortage. That is because many Latinos live in urban areas where rents continue to rise and safe, affordable housing stock is low. Immigrant renters are particularly vulnerable to dealing with unscrupulous landlords who will seek to weaponize their tenants' perceived immigration status to impose unlawful rent hikes or evictions.

Fears that immigrants may face increased exploitation are not misplaced. Consider the case of Jose E. Zavala-Padilla, a Chicago-area resident who lost nearly everything in 2020 following a rent dispute with his landlord.

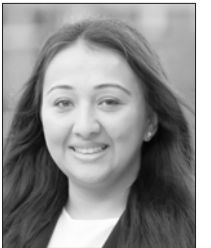
In a 2021 lawsuit filed in state court, Zavala-Padilla said immigration officials detained him for nearly a month because his landlord grew angry after he raised concerns over the condition of the \$600-a-month basement unit he rented. Zavala-Padilla asked the landlord to repair a leak that was making the unit uninhabitable. When the landlord refused, Zavala-Padilla made the repairs himself. The next month, he paid his rent a few days late and deducted the cost of the repairs. His landlord demanded the full amount and threatened to report Zavala-Padilla to immigration officials, the suit said. He agreed to move out before month's end, but his landlord retaliated by locking him out of the unit and then calling immigration officials.

Fortunately, Zavala-Padilla lives in a state with an anti-discrimination law that provides robust protections for immigrant tenants. A 2019 law, the Illinois Immigration Tenant Protection Act, bans landlords from harassing, intimidating or threatening to disclose a tenant's perceived immigration status. The ITPA allows tenants like Zavala-Padilla to sue landlords who violate the ITPA and recover damages. But more importantly, it sends a message to these landlords that they will have to pay for their unlawful behavior.

With help from Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, or MALDEF, Zavala-Padilla became one of the first people in Illinois to use the ITPA's protections to sue his landlord. The case is ongoing, but since then, MALDEF has filed a similar case on behalf of a couple whose landlord threatened to

By **SUSANA SANDOVAL VARGAS**
Chicago Tribune

Susana Sandoval Vargas is a staff attorney at MALDEF's Midwest regional office in Chicago.



report them to immigration authorities over a rent dispute.

Zavala's case should be a reminder to landlords who may attempt to skirt the law that they could face consequences. And it may also be a source of hope for tenants who may not be aware

Everyone deserves to have safe and affordable housing to call home, regardless of their immigration status.

of the 3-year-old law's protections and may fear speaking out about poor housing conditions. Everyone deserves to have safe and affordable housing to call home, regardless of their immigration status.

Untold numbers of tenants struggle to deal with abusive landlords who act with impunity, believing housing protections do not apply to immigrants. These tenants fear exercising their rights could have unintended consequences, like being separated from their family. They are often unjustly faced with having to choose between asserting

their right to safe housing and keeping their families together.

The problem is exacerbated by the dearth of states that explicitly address the plight of immigrant renters.

As of last year, Illinois, California and New York are a few states to explicitly recognize more must be done to ensure every tenant, regardless of immigration status, is entitled to safe and fair housing.

Some states with large immigrant communities are considering similar measures or have a patchwork of laws that fail to provide uniform protections. For example, New Jersey's Law Against Discrimination bars discrimination against renters, but it does not include immigration status as a protected class.

Immigrants are an integral part of the fabric of this country. A person's basic right to decent and safe housing should not be a fight in 2023, yet stories such as Zavala-Padilla's are all too common. While Illinois is a leader in this fight, the rest of the country must step up to protect immigrants who play such an important role in keeping this country's economy functioning.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Obesity drugs for kids? Why new guidelines make sense

A leading organization of pediatricians is recommending that teens with obesity be offered weight-loss medication as part of a comprehensive treatment plan. But unless barriers to access fall, it won't move the needle on the U.S. childhood obesity epidemic—something that affects more than 1 in 5 kids in the country.

The American Academy of Pediatrics' latest comprehensive childhood obesity guidelines are welcome acknowledgment that the old approach of "watchful waiting," or putting off intervention to see if a child will grow out of or overcome obesity, too often doesn't work. The recommendations also underscore that obesity is not a question of willpower, but a health condition with complex biological, socioeconomic and environmental drivers that deserves comprehensive treatment—and that behavioral and lifestyle changes alone do not work for everyone.

"Extra body weight often does follow kids into adulthood," says Sarah Hampl, chair of the committee that devised the guidelines and a pediatric weight management specialist at University of Kansas School of Medicine. With 14 million kids in the U.S. affected by obesity, "it's a very real and serious problem that poses health risks now and in the future for these kids." Those long-term risks include diabetes, high cholesterol, sleep apnea and fatty liver disease.

These new guidelines are a marked—and needed—shift from the AAP's previous position on managing obesity in children, made 15 years ago. The mantra at the time was "prevent, prevent, prevent" says Fatima Cody Stanford, an obesity doctor at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital. "With more than 20% of kids with obesity now, we would be very shortsighted if we did not recognize that we have to treat in addition to preventing obesity."

The recommendations, which apply to kids 12 and older, arrive at a time when newer obesity drugs can offer more substantive and sustained weight loss than previous drugs. The treatments, including Novo Nordisk's Wegovy, Eli Lilly & Co.'s Mounjaro, and several other closely-watched drugs in development, mimic natural hormones that help control appetite. For some people, the

drugs can induce weight loss at a level that is comparable to bariatric surgery.

But getting the drugs has been a huge hassle for many adults—and teens' families are likely to encounter the same challenges. Novo Nordisk has been unable to keep up with demand for Wegovy since its approval by the Food and Drug Administration in 2021. And last month, the FDA said that Mounjaro, which currently is only approved to treat diabetes, but is being used off-label for weight loss, is similarly in short supply. A TikTok trend pushing the use of diabetes drug Ozempic for weight loss—it uses the same ingredient as Wegovy—has only made the problem worse. It's also put the drug out of reach for some people with diabetes.

Moreover, adults have struggled to get insurers to cover Wegovy, which has a list price of more than \$1,600 per month. Last month, the FDA approved use of Wegovy in adolescents 12 and older, and already doctors are reporting hurdles to getting it covered for patients. Patients will likely face similar challenges with Mounjaro after it receives an expected FDA approval as an obesity treatment later this year.

The patchwork insurance coverage could exacerbate existing inequities in access to treatment for kids with obesity. Families already hit a wall when it comes to getting coverage for screening and behavioral treatment. The AAP's report notes that despite support from the United States Preventive Services Task Force, an independent group that makes evidence-backed recommendations, "the lack of payment by insurers remains a major barrier to childhood obesity treatment."

This formal recommendation by AAP should be yet another wake-up call to insurers that treatment, including medications, ought to be covered as part of a comprehensive program that includes a whole-family approach to nutrition, fitness and behavior.

Pediatricians, meanwhile, need to get up to speed on obesity management. That includes not only how to use these drugs, but on a more basic level, how to appropriately talk to teens and their families about obesity.

Most family physicians have received little training in obesity medicine, and not all doctors are approaching conversations with

By **LISA JARVIS**

Bloomberg Opinion

Lisa Jarvis is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering biotech, health care and the pharmaceutical industry. Previously, she was executive editor of Chemical & Engineering News.



families with empathetic language—and some aren't comfortable discussing the topic of obesity at all out of a misplaced fear of stigmatizing a patient. When those conversations go wrong, the AAP previously noted, it can delay or even prevent a teen's access to treatment.

None of this is to suggest that these drugs are a quick fix to the country's obesity problem—or even the right answer for every teen.

Parents and teens considering medication should know that they might need to stay on it indefinitely. Studies show that people who stop taking obesity drugs typically gain back the weight. An open question—one that families will want to understand and companies need to do more to explore—is whether patients will need to remain on the same dose for life, or if they could eventually maintain their weight with a lower or less frequent dose.

Families will rightly want to know about the safety of long-term use of the drugs—and also any long-term health benefits. So far, such data is limited for both teens and adults.

Medication is just one tool in addressing the growing issue of childhood obesity. Prevention, of course, would be the preferred approach, but one that requires addressing complex structural inequities in the U.S.

But the childhood obesity epidemic is already here—and worsening. This step towards making weight loss drugs more readily available as part of a comprehensive treatment approach for teens is a good one.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In response to Jan. 23 article, 'Alleged FAM tour denounced'

This letter is to clarify and give light to statements printed in your newspaper on Jan. 23, 2023. The article was based on a statement issued by Sen. Karl King-Nabors (R-Tinian) disavowing or having any knowledge of a tour that my company was to host this week. The term "FAM Tour" is short for "familiarization tour." This is a common service provided mainly in the tourism and hospitality industry for tour agents and tour advisors to familiarize themselves with a new destination wherein they will investigate and deliberate whether to do business in a new location.

My company, Sherman Consulting, has been involved with advising and consulting numerous regional and international

firms as well as local and federal government entities specifically to introduce them to the island of Tinian and its potential. The familiarization tour that we have been planning was intended to introduce companies to local and federal leaders, civic organizations, and businesses in the construction/logistics/supply industries in the hopes that they will open branches in the CNMI, in the hopes that they will partner with local companies, and in the hopes that more jobs and opportunities will be granted to our people.

Further, the purpose of these tours is to encourage more Guam firms to investigate investment and partnership opportunities in the CNMI and specifically on Tinian where \$1.5 billion worth of development will take place in the next few years. This will help our failing economy and encourage partnerships so that Guam and CNMI companies can benefit from the economic impact the military buildup will bring to Tinian.

The first tour of 2023, which was scheduled for this week, was cancelled due to guests contracting COVID. Although Sen. Nabors disavows any knowledge of such a tour being set up to meet the Tinian delegation, our office had spoken to the mayor's chief of staff and former Tinian Delegation chair/Senate president Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider of the upcoming visits, and both confirmed their participation. Sherman Pacific apologizes for not speaking directly to Sen. Nabors, but we had assumed that the former delegation chair would've passed on this message to his members.

On the issue of "pay to play," the fee that we have set for guests covers our company costs of 15-hour days with three consultants for five days straight as well as ground transportation costs and other costs. This is not pay to play. In fact, U.S. mainland or

Guam businesspeople usually don't need or request to meet with elected officials. We offered this as part of the agenda as a courtesy call so that leadership understands what we are trying to do as a team. This is introducing serious-minded professionals and their teams to like-minded government and private sector organizations, and as stated previously, in the hopes that new opportunities for all parties can be realized by shaking hands and discussing needs.

I am unfamiliar with how the senator interprets this as an attempt to pay to play, when the focus of the group coming to Tinian is obviously only federal related.

We hope in the future, being a small island, that if Sen. Nabors had questions, he will kindly send an e-mail, call, or meet in person. However, to set up this article to be published the day that guests were to land on Saipan seemed personal to us and an obvious form of political retaliation for not supporting

'This type of ugly politics only harms our attempts to work together to better the future for all Tinian residents...'

his candidate for governor.

Tinian is small. Our people are families and friends. This type of ugly politics only harms our attempts to work together to better the future for all Tinian residents, not just the connected.

Our Sherman Consulting "Familiarization Tours" will still resume in several months and guests that have already pre-booked, local private sector companies seeking investment and partnerships, and dignitaries in the CNMI that await them all look forward to the beginning of new friendships and cooperative efforts to take care of hard-working people looking for honest work.

Phillip T. Mendiola Long
President, Sherman Consulting

MONTEREY

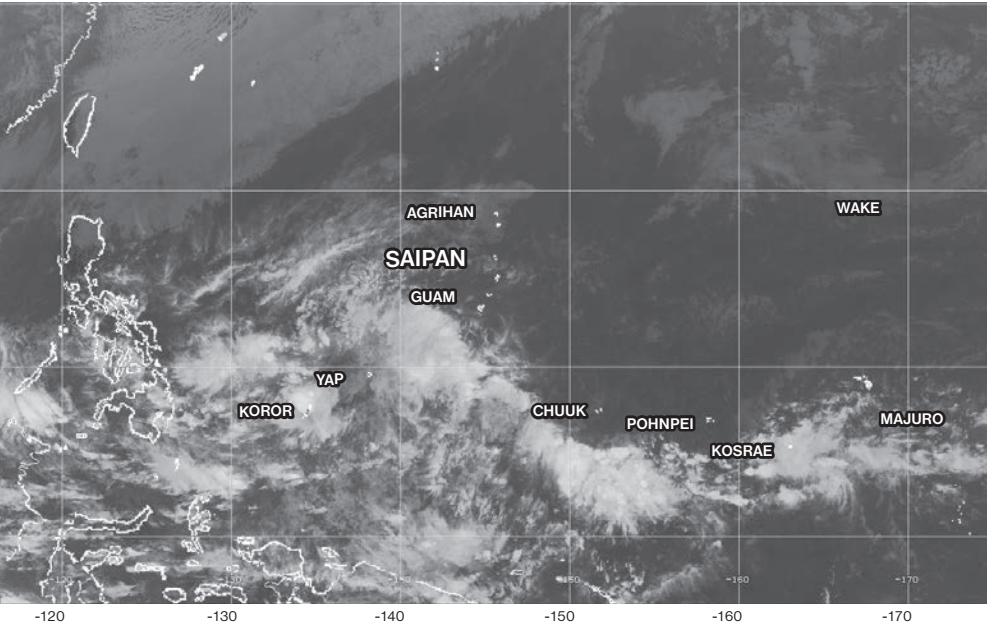
From Page 8

dom. Second Amendment rights are no further beyond rational limitations than First Amendment rights. Our system protects Americans from injury and death, for example, by limiting a person's "right" to falsely yell "fire" in a crowded theater. It also could protect us—if we insisted on it—from those who would fire a gun in that same theater. Or at a festival in Gilroy, a bar in Thousand Oaks, a holiday party in San Bernardino or a synagogue in San Diego County.

Or a dance studio in Monterey Park.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny	
86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	75°	86°	75°	86°	75°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 8:40 AM, TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate to fresh trade winds prevail. A thin line of showers is evident on infrared satellite this morning passing across southern waters of Guam. Otherwise it is partly cloudy skies and a few light trade showers/sprinkles similar to the last few days. Trade swell, wind waves and an inkling of north swell are producing combined seas of 7 to 10 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°	
Palau	Scattered Thunderstorms	81° / 75°	
Yap	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:11 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:13 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	9:34 AM	9:43 PM	-
Thursday	10:15 AM	10:38 PM	-
Friday	10:54 AM	11:31 PM	-
Saturday	11:33 AM	-	-
Sunday	-	12:24 AM	12:13 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 65°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	25° / 7°	
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	58° / 56°	
Honolulu	Thunderstorms	80° / 67°	
London	Light Rain	42° / 35°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	67° / 44°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	83° / 70°	
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	82° / 60°	
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	76° / 73°	
New York	Partly Cloudy	45° / 34°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	36° / 29°	
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	36° / 31°	
Busan	Sunny	34° / 23°	
Rome	Partly Cloudy	56° / 37°	
Salem	Mostly Sunny	57° / 46°	
San Francisco	Sunny	61° / 43°	
Seoul	Sunny	22° / 15°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	38° / 26°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	51° / 32°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
4:13 AM	Low Tide	-0.54	
11:02 AM	High Tide	1.84	
4:56 PM	Low Tide	0.77	
9:57 PM	High Tide	1.70	

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
TW9308	3:30AM	7:10AM	2, 4	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6	TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW9307	9:00PM	2:30AM+1	1, 5
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS					
INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022					
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			TINIAN TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)	7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.		10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)	4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)
SAIPAN TO ROTA			ROTA TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.		9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.		2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	
SAIPAN TO GUAM			GUAM TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.		12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.		6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.			
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022			
SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM			
LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

Atkins Kroll donates to Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam & CNMI

TAMUNING, Guam—Atkins Kroll donated \$1,914 to Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam & CNMI through its Community Matters program with a check presentation last Friday, Jan. 20, in the AK Toyota showroom. The proceeds will contribute to Make-A-Wish's upcoming fundraiser, Bow Ties for Wishes—a special event that will feature a live and silent auction of luxury and vintage watches donated by the late Dr. Chris Perez, a long-term board member of Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam & CNMI.

"We at Atkins Kroll are pleased to donate to Make-A-Wish's Bow Ties for Wishes event. The mission of Make-A-Wish is one that touches the hearts of all of us at AK and to commemorate Dr. Perez as an integral member of the Guam and CNMI chapter



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Denise David, AK Lexus Sales manager; Tom Mazzei, AK Sales director; Tracy Guerrero, AK Operations director; Eric Tydingco, Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI president and CEO; Trina Cruz, AK Marketing and Communications director; Ernie Galito, AK Business Development director; and Athena Ramos, AK Marketing and Communications manager.

Musk: Tweets about taking Tesla private weren't fraud

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Elon Musk returned to federal court Monday in San Francisco, testifying that he believed he had locked up financial backing to take Tesla private during 2018 meetings with representatives from Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund — although no specific funding amount or price was discussed.

The 51-year-old billionaire Tesla CEO and Twitter owner is facing a class action lawsuit filed by Tesla investors alleging he misled them with a tweet saying funding was secured to take his electric car company private — for \$420 per share.

But the deal never came close to happening, and the tweet resulted in a \$40 million settlement with securities regulators.

The trial hinges on the question of whether a pair of tweets that Musk posted on Aug. 7, 2018, damaged Tesla shareholders during a 10-day period leading up to Musk's admission that the buyout he had envisioned wasn't going to happen.

Speaking in a soft halting tone, Musk said Monday he "had trouble sleeping last night and unfortunately I am not at my best." He added that it was important for jurors to know that he "felt that funding was secured" due to his ownership of "SpaceX stock alone."

"Just as I sold stock in Tesla to buy Twitter. ... I didn't

want to sell Tesla stock but I did sell Tesla stock," he said of the sale to make up for lack of funding from other sources for his \$44 billion deal to take Twitter private. Musk sold nearly \$23 billion worth of his car company's shares between last April, when he started building a position in Twitter, and December.

"My SpaceX shares alone would have meant that funding was secured," Musk said of the 2018 tweets.

Even before Musk first took the stand on Friday, U.S. District Judge Edward Chen had declared that jurors can consider those two tweets to be false, leaving them to decide whether Musk deliberately deceived investors and whether his statements saddled them with losses.

Musk has previously contended he entered into the Securities and Exchange Commission settlement under duress and maintained he believed he had locked up financial backing for a Tesla buyout during meetings with representatives from Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund.

At a July 31, 2018 meeting, the Saudi Public Investment Fund's Yasir Al-Rumayyan "confirmed unequivocally that they would support Tesla going private. That was part of what 'funding secure' meant," Musk said Monday. "But in addition there was SpaceX stock, which could also be used."

is a true honor. There are no words to relay the gratitude we feel in taking part in bringing some light into our children's lives when they need it most," said Trina Cruz, AK Marketing and Communications director.

"We are grateful for the support that AK has given us with this donation. As we celebrate 35 years of granting wishes to the children of Guam and the CNMI, every

dollar counts in helping us achieve our mission," said Eric Tydingco, Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam & CNMI president and CEO.

Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam & CNMI is a non-profit organization that, for over 35 years, has delivered wishes to children with critical illnesses in its region. To learn more, please visit <https://wish.org/guamcnmi>.

Community Matters is

Atkins Kroll's care for the community program. Its purpose is to contribute value and support where possible to non-profit organizations or endeavors in their charitable or community pursuit to help make Guam a better place to live, work, and play. The donated amount of \$1,914 signifies the year 1914 that Atkins Kroll, Inc., one of Guam's oldest and most prominent businesses,

FAO: Rising prices, food insecurity add to ranks of hungry

BANGKOK (AP)—Growing numbers of people in Asia lack enough to eat as food insecurity rises with higher prices and worsening poverty, according to a report released Tuesday by the Food and Agricultural Organization and other United Nations agencies.

Nearly a half-billion people, more than eight in 10 of them in South Asia, were undernourished in 2021 and more than 1 billion faced moderate to severe food insecurity, the report said. For the world, the prevalence of food insecurity rose to more than 29% in 2021 from 21% in 2014.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a huge setback, causing mass job losses and disruptions, and the war in Ukraine has pushed up prices for food, energy and fertilizer, putting an adequate diet out of the reach of many millions, it said.

The report is the fifth annual stocktaking on food insecurity and hunger by U.N. agencies including the FAO, UNICEF, World Health Organization and World Food Program.

Over those years, progress toward alleviating hunger

and malnutrition has stalled and then backslid as growing numbers of people lost the wherewithal to get enough to eat. The prevalence of undernourishment as measured by the U.N. agencies was 9.1% in 2021, better than the 14.3% in 2000 but up slightly from 2020.

Such figures show that "the slowdown in the fight against hunger continues," said the report, which also highlights the growing food insecurity faced by people who have moved into cities, where they have less easy access to affordable food.

"Reforming our agrifood systems to produce nutritious food and ensure equitable access to healthy diets is critical," it said.

The FAO's Food Price Index has risen in the past several years, hitting a record in March 2022. It fell back as commodity prices declined somewhat later in the year but is still 28% above the 2020 level.

The Asia-Pacific region imports nearly \$2 trillion of food a year. Rising prices for basics

like rice, wheat and oil hit the poor the hardest.

It's part of what the U.N. agencies call the "5F" crisis of not enough food, feed, fertilizer, fuel and financing. The conflict in Ukraine has dealt a heavy blow in many countries that depended on the region for wheat, edible oils and fertilizers.

Nearly 2 billion people—or almost 45% of people living in Asia—cannot afford healthy diets, contributing to problems with anemia and obesity as well as hunger.

Underscoring the impact of the pandemic, which hit vulnerable workers in the tourism and manufacturing industries especially hard, nearly one in 10 Thais were undernourished in 2019-2021, according to data in the report—a higher proportion than several years earlier and also than in many other Southeast Asian countries where average incomes are much lower. Poverty already had risen by 2.6% between 2015-2018, according to World Bank data.

"An increase in poverty and in undernourishment would

was founded. Atkins Kroll has made cash contributions of \$1,914 to various charitable and non-profit organizations each month since the company celebrated its 100th anniversary in May 2014.

Atkins Kroll, an Inchcape company, is the leading distributor of vehicles in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Micronesia enabling it to provide a full range of products and services in the region. Atkins Kroll is Guam's oldest corporation established in 1914 and represents Toyota, Lexus, BMW, Chevrolet, Toyota Rent A Car, Avis, Budget and Payless Rental Car, and AC Delco brands. In December 2021 Atkins Kroll acquired Morrico Equipment, one of Guam's largest heavy equipment dealerships representing Freightliner, Hyundai Construction Equipment, Kohler Power Systems, Rosenbauer Fire Trucks and Thomas Built School Buses. Morrico Equipment operates new and used heavy equipment sales, rental, parts, diesel fuel delivery, Trashco Guam, and specialized diesel repair service to Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. (PR)

go together," Sridhar Dharmapuri, the FAO's author for the report released Tuesday, said in explaining the situation.

Unhealthy diets and inadequate food are also compromising future health and productivity, as they cause children to suffer from stunting or wasting and make them more susceptible to illness. The report says nearly a quarter of children in the Asia-Pacific are affected by stunting, or small height for their ages.

Some other details from the report:

—In Afghanistan, 70% of people are facing moderate or severe food insecurity as the economy has collapsed after the Taliban seized power in August 2021, driving millions into poverty and hunger as foreign aid stopped almost overnight.

—In Cambodia, half of the population faces moderate or severe food insecurity.

—One-third of women in Asia aged 15-49 are affected by anemia, which causes fatigue and, in its most severe forms, can cause lung and heart damage.

Nation

US proposes once-a-year COVID shots for most Americans

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S. health officials want to make COVID-19 vaccinations more like the annual flu shot.

The Food and Drug Administration on Monday proposed a simplified approach for future vaccination efforts, allowing most adults and children to get a once-a-year shot to protect against the mutating virus.

This means Americans would no longer have to keep track of how many shots they've received or how many months it's been since their last booster.

The proposal comes as boosters have become a hard sell. While more than 80% of the U.S. population has had at least one vaccine dose, only 16% of those eligible have received the latest boosters authorized in August.

The FDA will ask its panel of outside vaccine experts to weigh in at a meeting Thursday. The agency is expected to take their advice into consideration while deciding future vaccine requirements for manufacturers.

In documents posted online, FDA scientists say many Americans now have "sufficient preexisting immunity" against the coronavirus because of vaccination, infection or a combination of the two.



A nurse prepares a syringe of a COVID-19 vaccine at an inoculation station in Jackson, Miss., July 19, 2022.

AP

That baseline of protection should be enough to move to an annual booster against the latest strains in circulation and make COVID-19 vaccinations more like the yearly flu shot, according to the agency.

For adults with weakened immune systems and very

small children, a two-dose combination may be needed for protection. FDA scientists and vaccine companies would study vaccination, infection rates and other data to decide who should receive a single shot versus a two-dose series.

FDA will also ask its panel

to vote on whether all vaccines should target the same strains. That step would be needed to make the shots interchangeable, doing away with the

current complicated system of primary vaccinations and boosters.

The initial shots from Pfizer and Moderna—called the

primary series — target the strain of the virus that first emerged in 2020 and quickly swept across the world. The updated boosters launched last fall were also tweaked to target omicron relatives that had been dominant.

Under FDA's proposal, the agency, independent experts and manufacturers would decide annually on which strains to target by the early summer, allowing several months to produce and launch updated shots before the fall. That's roughly the same approach long used to select the strains for the annual flu shot.

Ultimately, FDA officials say moving to an annual schedule would make it easier to promote future vaccination campaigns, which could ultimately boost vaccination rates nationwide.

The original two-dose COVID shots have offered strong protection against severe disease and death no matter the variant, but protection against mild infection wanes. Experts continue to debate whether the latest round of boosters significantly enhanced protection, particularly for younger, healthy Americans.

Sheriff seeking what drove 'mad man' to shoot up dance hall

MONTEREY PARK, Calif. (AP)—Investigators searching for a motive Monday in the worst mass shooting in Los Angeles County history said the gunman was previously arrested for illegally possessing a firearm, had a rifle at home, hundreds of rounds of ammunition and appeared to be manufacturing gun silencers.

Los Angeles Sheriff Robert Luna said investigators had not yet established why 72-year-old Huu Can Tran gunned down patrons Saturday night at a ballroom dance hall in Monterey Park, where tens of thousands attended Lunar New Year festivities earlier that evening. Tran later killed himself as police closed in on him.

"What drove a mad man to do this? We don't know, but we intend to find out," Luna said.

A man who said he had been a longtime friend of Tran told The Associated Press that the gunman once frequented the dance hall and another that he also targeted and griped about the way he thought people treated him there.

Tran fired 42 rounds at the Star Ballroom Dance Studio, killing 11 people and wounding nine. He then drove to an

other nearby dance hall where an employee wrestled a modified 9 mm submachine gun-style semi-automatic weapon away from him, Luna said.

Gov. Gavin Newsom met Monday with Brandon Tsay, who works part-time at the dance club founded by his grandparents, and said he was a true hero. "This remarkable young man who without any hesitation—though with moments of fear—took it upon himself to save countless lives," Newsom said. "Who knows how many lives he saved."

Tsay said he was proud of his actions but did not want to discuss them so the focus would stay on the victims.

"Some of these people I know personally," Tsay said outside his family's home. They come to our studio. It's a tight knit community and I hope they can heal from this tragic event"

Tran fatally shot himself Sunday as officers surrounded the van he was inside. A handgun was recovered from the van, which matched descriptions of the vehicle he used to get away from the dance studio.

Sheriff's deputies from Los Angeles County searched Tran's

home in a gated senior community in the town of Hemet, a little over an hour's drive from the site of the massacre.

Luna said his officers found a .308-caliber rifle, an unknown amount of bullets and evidence he was making homemade firearm suppressors that muffle the sound of the weapons.

Tran had visited Hemet police twice this month to report he was the victim of fraud, theft and poisoning by family members a decade or two ago in the LA area, Hemet police spokesperson Alan Reyes told The Associated Press. Tran said he would return to the station with documentation but never did.

The death toll rose to 11 Monday after health officials announced that one of the 10 people wounded had died, officials said.

My Nhan, 65, Lilian Li, 63, and Xiujuan Yu, 57, were identified by the Los Angeles coroner's office as three of the six women killed. Two other women were in their 60s, and one was in her 70s. Valentino Alvero, 68, was the only man identified. Three men in their 70s and one in his 60s were also killed.

ACROSS THE NATION

Four Oath Keepers convicted of Jan. 6 seditious conspiracy

WASHINGTON (AP)—Four members of the Oath Keepers were convicted Monday of seditious conspiracy in the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol attack in the second major trial of far-right extremists accused of plotting to forcibly keep President Donald Trump in power. The verdict against Joseph Hackett of Sarasota, Florida; Roberto Minuta of Prosper, Texas; David Moerschel of Punta Gorda, Florida; and Edward Vallejo of Phoenix comes weeks after a different jury convicted the group's leader, Stewart Rhodes, in the mob's attack that halted the certification of President Joe Biden's electoral victory. It's another major victory for the Justice Department, which is also trying to secure sedition convictions against the former leader of the Proud Boys and four associates. The trial against Enrique Tarrio and his lieutenants opened earlier this month in Washington and is expected to last several weeks. The Washington jury deliberated for about 12 hours over three days before delivering their guilty verdict on the rarely used charge,

which carries up to 20 years in prison. The four were also convicted of two other conspiracy charges as well as obstructing an official proceeding: Congress' certification of the 2020 election. Minuta, Hackett and Moerschel were acquitted of lesser charges.

Official: 7 killed in California community; suspect arrested

HALF MOON BAY, Calif. (AP)—Seven people were killed in two related shootings Monday at agricultural facilities in a California coastal community south of San Francisco, and a suspect was in custody, officials said. Four people were found dead and a fifth injured from gunshot wounds at one location, and three others were found dead at another several miles away, the San Mateo County Sheriff's office said. Details about the locations weren't immediately clear. Sheriff Christina Corpus said they were nurseries. The shootings occurred on the outskirts of Half Moon Bay, a city about 30 miles (48 kilometers) south of San Francisco. Officers arrested 67-year-old Chunli Zhao in connection with the shooting, the sheriff's office said.

Police: 2 students killed, man hurt in Des Moines shooting

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Two teenage students were killed Monday and a man was seriously injured in what police said was a targeted shooting at an alternative educational program designed to keep at-risk youth away from trouble. The injured man was identified as the program's founder—a rapper who left a life of gangs and violence and has been dedicated to helping youth in Des Moines. Police said Monday that one man had been charged in the shooting, and two other people remained in custody. Preston Walls, 18, of Des Moines, was charged with two counts of murder and one count of attempted murder for the shooting at the Starts Right Here program. He was also charged with criminal gang participation. Authorities said the shooting was the result of an ongoing gang dispute. Police said Walls was on supervised release for a weapons charge and had removed his ankle monitor 16 minutes before the shooting. "The incident was definitely targeted. It was not random. There was nothing random about this," Sgt. Paul Parizek said.

Asia

Marcos seeks foreign minister talks with China on sea feuds



AP

In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, Visiting Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., right, walks with Chinese President Xi Jinping after reviewing an honor guard during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Jan. 4, 2023.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Monday he has proposed to China that the two countries hold talks between their foreign ministers to quickly resolve any new conflicts in the disputed South China Sea, and blamed Chinese actions for the disagreements.

Marcos told Philippine TV networks in an interview that Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to his proposal in their talks in Beijing early this month and the two sides are ironing out the details of such an arrangement.

There was no immediate reaction from Chinese officials.

China and the Philippines, along with Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, have been locked in an increasingly tense standoff over their overlapping claims in the busy and resource-rich waterway,

which is regarded as a potential Asian flashpoint.

In 2017, the Asian neighbors launched regular diplomatic talks called the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism to discuss incidents in the disputed waters and prevent any escalation while discussing other aspects of their relations.

Despite the talks, conflicts have persisted, including a recent incident reported by Filipino fishermen who accused the Chinese coast guard of driving them away from Philippine-occupied Second Thomas Shoal, which Beijing also claims, and then shadowing their vessel as it left the disputed area on Jan. 9. The incident occurred a few days after Marcos made a visit to China and met Xi.

The Philippine coast guard said it deployed more patrol ships to protect the Filipino fish-

ermen after the incident.

Marcos said he proposed to Xi in their meeting in Beijing that their top diplomats lead the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism, which is currently handled by mid-level diplomats, to allow a more rapid response to future conflicts in the disputed sea.

“My proposal is that we bring that bilateral group to a higher level,” Marcos said, adding that he would also ask the Philippine ambassador to China to be part of the higher-level talks. “I guarantee you that if there is any decision that needs to be made, either of those gentlemen can pick up the telephone and talk to me and within five minutes we will have a decision.”

Marcos said Xi agreed to his proposal and asked the Chinese foreign minister to discuss the new arrangement with Philippine officials.

from the heat.

“As an economic measure, we temporarily shut down our power generation systems” Sunday night, Dastgir said. When engineers tried to turn the systems back on, a “fluctuation in voltage” was observed, which “forced engineers to shut down the power grid” stations one by one.

Dastgir insisted the outage did not constitute a major crisis and that electricity was being restored in phases. In many places and key businesses and institutions, including hospitals, military and government facilities, backup generators kicked in.

By late afternoon Monday, Dastgir told reporters at another press conference that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif ordered a probe into the outage.

“We are hoping that the supply of electricity will be fully restored tonight,” he said.

Lights out in Pakistan as energy-saving move backfires

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Most of Pakistan was left without power Monday as an energy-saving measure by the government backfired. The outage spread panic and raised questions about the cash-strapped government’s handling of the country’s economic crisis.

It all started when electricity was turned off during low usage hours overnight to conserve fuel across the country, officials said, leaving technicians unable to boot up the system all at once after daybreak. The outage was reminiscent of a massive blackout in January 2021, attributed at the time to a technical fault in Pakistan’s power generation and distribution system.

Many major cities, including the capital of Islamabad, and remote towns and villages across Pakistan were without electricity for more than 12 hours. As the electricity failure continued into Monday night, authorities

deployed additional police at markets around the country to provide security.

Officials announced late Monday that power was restored in many cities, 15 hours after the outage was reported.

Earlier, the nationwide electricity breakdown left many in this country of some 220 million people without drinking water as pumps powered by electricity failed to work. Schools, hospitals, factories and shops were without power amid the harsh winter weather.

Energy Minister Khuram Dastgir told local media that engineers were working to restore power across the country and tried to reassure the nation that power would be fully restored within the next 12 hours.

According to the minister, electricity usage typically goes down overnight during winter—unlike summer months when Pakistanis turn to air conditioning, seeking a respite

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Hungary won't veto EU arms funding to Ukraine, official says

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP)—Hungary’s foreign minister said Monday that while his government isn’t in favor of the European Union sending funding for weapons to Ukraine, it won’t block a planned tranche of 500 million euros (\$543 million) in assistance to Kyiv to use in the war with Russia.

Speaking at a news briefing on the sidelines of a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels, Peter Szijarto dismissed as “lies” media reports that emerged last week that Hungary planned to veto the funds earmarked for Ukraine under the bloc’s European Peace Facility.

Hungary opposes the delivery of Western weapons to Ukraine — something Szijarto said could “lead to the prolongation or potential escalation” of the war — but the government won’t veto the aid package, he said.

“We don’t consider weapons shipments, nor the hundreds of millions of euros Europe has spent to finance them, a good idea. But we won’t block the decision,” he said.

While Hungary’s government hasn’t blocked previous payouts under the facility, which has to date delivered 3.1 billion euros in arms funding to Ukraine, it did veto an 18-billion euro aid package in December, leaving the EU’s other 26 nations scrambling to keep the money supply going.

Budapest has also vocally opposed sanctions against Moscow, arguing they have done more damage to EU countries than to Russia, and has refused to provide Ukraine with weapons or allow their transfer across its border with Ukraine.

UN chief insists on special armed forces as Haiti spirals

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—U.N. Secretary General António Guterres on Monday insisted on the deployment of an international specialized armed force to Haiti and called on governments to consider halting deportations as the country’s situation spirals.

The recommendations were issued as part of a report on the U.N. Integrated Office in Haiti, with Guterres noting that gang-related violence and human rights violations have reached a critical level.

“The people of Haiti are suffering the worst human rights and humanitarian emer-

gency in decades,” he wrote.

Guterres noted that while last year’s gang-led siege at a main fuel terminal has ended, a special force is still needed to ensure that key infrastructure remains unobstructed and that people are able to safely vote in a general election whose date has not been set.

The number of reported killings soared by 35% last year compared with the previous year, with more than 2,100 slain. In addition, kidnappings more than doubled last year, with more than 1,350 victims.

Meanwhile, Haiti’s National Police is underfunded and under-resourced, with only some 9,700 active-duty officers in a country of more than 11 million people.

“There are also allegations that a significant number of national police... may be associated with gangs,” Guterres said.

In recent months, countries including Canada and the U.S. have offered training and resources including armored vehicles, but police remain largely outmatched by gangs whose power and territorial control have expanded since President Jovenel Moïse was slain at his private residence in July 2021.

EU widens Iran sanctions list in response to crackdown

BRUSSELS (AP)—The European Union on Monday imposed sanctions on dozens of Iranian officials and organizations, including a government minister, regional governors and lawmakers, suspected in the security crackdown on protestors, but did not add Iran’s Revolutionary Guard to its terror group blacklist.

At a meeting in Brussels, EU foreign ministers agreed to slap a travel ban and asset freeze on Iran’s Sports and Youth Minister Hamid Sajjadi, accusing him of pressuring Iran’s athletes into silence, including an Iranian climber who competed without Islamic headdress at a competition in Seoul.

The Iranian Special Police Forces were also targeted, accused of using “excessive violence and lethal force against unarmed protestors, including women and children ... by firing automatic weapons at protestors.”

Another asset freeze was imposed on the Headquarters for Enjoining Right and Forbidding Evil, an Iranian government institution that the EU believes is responsible “for determining and enforcing excessively strict behavioral models in society.”

Companies linked to cyber security, spyware, social media filtering, and the production of

security equipment allegedly used in the crackdown were also hit. Restrictive measures were slapped on senior officers from the Revolutionary Guard and some of its regional units.

The 27-nation bloc had already imposed three rounds of sanctions on Iranian officials and organizations— including ministers, military officers and Iran’s morality police—for human rights abuses over the protests that erupted in Iran in mid-September over the death of Mahsa Amini.

The 22-year-old woman died after being arrested by the morality police for allegedly violating the Islamic Republic’s strict dress code. Women have played a leading role in the protests, with many publicly removing the compulsory Islamic headscarf, known as the hijab.

Building collapse in Syrian city of Aleppo leaves 16 dead

BEIRUT (AP)—A building collapsed in a neighborhood in Syria’s northern city of Aleppo early Sunday, killing at least 16 people, including one child, and injuring four others, state media reported.

The five-story building housing about 30 people is in the Sheikh Maksoud neighborhood under the control of the U.S.-backed Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. It collapsed overnight, according to the report, after water leakages weakened the structure’s foundation.

Dozens of firefighters, first responders and residents covered in debris and dust were searching through the rubble for the remaining residents with drills and a bulldozer.

Some relatives of the tenants waited anxiously nearby, while others mourned at the entrance of a nearby hospital as the bodies arrived in ambulances and on the backs of trucks.

Hawar News, the news agency for the semi-autonomous Kurdish areas in Syria, initially reported that seven people were killed and three were injured, two of them critically.

SDF Commander Mazloum Abdi in a statement condemned the Syrian government forces that control the neighborhoods surrounding Sheikh Maksoud for “banning for years the entry of basic materials into the neighborhood, obstructing efforts to stabilize and restore life in the area.”

Many buildings in Aleppo were destroyed or damaged during Syria’s 11-year conflict, which has killed hundreds of thousands and displaced half the country’s pre-war population of 23 million.

Nation

What it's really like to work with a designer

By KATIE LAUGHRIDGE
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Working with a designer is an exciting—and may I say game-changing—way to design a room. Designers can help you think outside of your comfort zone and consider things you might have otherwise overlooked. However, if you haven't done it before, starting out can also feel a little intimidating.

So, I sat down with Carlie, Nell Hill's design manager and longtime designer, to share what it's really like.

What do I need to have prepared for my first appointment?

While this process truly is stress-free, there is a little bit of background work that would be helpful to have complete going into your first meeting with a designer. Having these items finished beforehand not only allows you to make the best of your time, but helps your design partner learn more about you and your personal style.

Room measurements: Measure the full length and width of your room and note the location and size of all windows, doors and stationary elements (like a fireplace or window seat). Be sure to note large, existing furniture pieces as well. This helps to



HANDOUT/TNS

A designer can help you think outside the box, like this fun fabric pairings of a block print with matching green velvet.

ensure that any new pieces being brought in are the right scale – there's nothing worse than adding a new credenza to a space only to find out that it slightly overhangs a window frame, or worse, seriously impedes a walkway.

A clear budget in mind: This one is imperative, and

probably a no-brainer. But, being upfront and honest about your design budget gives your designer a clear direction when coming up with creative solutions for your design.

Photos of the existing space: It's important to think about how your new design will work with the existing



HANDOUT/TNS

Designers think about the whole space, like the way these chairs perfectly pair with the maximalist style of the vignette behind it.

pieces in the room to keep it from feeling disjointed.

A mood board: Help set the direction of the design by coming to the appointment with a few suggestions of what you like. These can be images of rooms and things that inspire you, colors you love, a particular wallpaper or fabric – you

don't necessarily have to have a grand vision yet.

What is the first step in the design process?

Once you make an appointment with a designer, we get to work creating floor plans, begin pulling textiles for you to review and talk more about

your needs for the room. Depending on the size of the project, this can take place over one visit or several.

From start to finish, our goal is to create a space that is a true reflection of you. Clients are an important part of the design process, and your feedback at every stage is welcomed and valued. This is your space, after all.

What is one thing you want clients to know about the design process?

We want to fully understand our client's needs, and for our clients to truly love their spaces. We believe that what you love is always in style, and we are ready to jump in and help no matter how big or small the project is.

How do I know that I've found the right fit in choosing a piece?

Our advice on this is timeless and to the point. We say trust your instincts! Just because something is trendy or "in" doesn't mean it's the right fit for your space. If you love it, you will know!

Adapted from nellhills.com. Katie Laughridge is the owner of Kansas City interior design destination Nell Hill's. For more information, contact Katie at info@nellhills.com.

By BRIGITTA SHANNON ROSE
ASK ANGI

In the coldest part of the year, you may be lamenting your heating bills and the occasional inefficient use of energy in your home. But recent federal code changes mean 2023 is the year to start making energy-efficient upgrades to both keep your home warm in winter and cool in summer.

Studies show that U.S. homes produce about 20% of the greenhouse gases in the country. To help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in homes, Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act in August 2022. The bill includes the High Efficiency Electric Home Rebate Act, which provides low- and moderate-income homes with point-of-sale rebates to help them reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by improving energy usage. Here are six ways to make sustainable improvements in your home this spring to prepare you for the colder days.

What are some great sustainable upgrades I can make in 2023?

Weatherize your walls and windows

Losing heat in the winter and cool air in the summer frustrates homeowners, who see the difference in their utility bills. But lost energy also increases the greenhouse gas emissions we want to avoid. To help prevent this, look into weatherizing your home by caulking and sealing your windows and installing insulation in your walls.

■ Caulking/sealing windows and doors: \$50-70 per window/door

■ Insulation installation: \$1,600-\$2,700

Rewire your home

Outdated wiring in your home causes inefficient energy usage and can be dangerous, depending on the situation. Always make sure to replace any knob and tube wiring to ensure safety. A professional knows the most up-to-date codes and can help you determine what energy needs fit your lifestyle. If you're con-



DREAMSTIME/TNS

Updating older wiring in your home can save energy.

sidering purchasing an electric car, definitely upgrade your electrical box.

■ Updating/replacing an electrical box: \$520-\$2,000 for 200 amps

■ Rewiring a home: \$2-\$4 per square foot of home size

Install efficient appliances

If you need to replace appliances like refrigerators, washers/dryers, dishwashers, water heaters and HVAC, look for ones that are Energy Star cer-

tified. These appliances' motors, compressors and pumps are designed to save energy. If your appliances are already Energy Star certified, install a smart thermostat to save more on your utility bill.

■ Installing a smart thermometer: \$110-\$250

Switch to heat pumps

Along with choosing energy-efficient water heaters, furnaces and air conditioners, installing heat pumps for water heaters and HVAC can protect both the

equipment and your utility bill. Heat pump water heaters can be the most expensive on the market, but they can be up to three times more efficient than electric or gas water heaters, even Energy Star-certified units.

HVAC heat pump technology has improved enough in recent years to be functional in colder climates that often dip below freezing. They are pricey to install but can save up to half your heating costs.

■ Heat pump water heaters: \$3,900-\$20,000

■ HVAC heat pumps: \$3,900-\$6,200

Install efficient toilets

Toilets made before 1980 use up to seven gallons of water per flush. Today's low-water toilets use about 1.5 gallons per flush. Dual-flow toilets use half- and full-flush options to help you use water more efficiently when flushing liquid or solid waste. Installing one of these toilets could save around \$100 on your yearly water bill, but they require more frequent

cleanings.

■ Toilet installation: \$400-\$800

Switch away from gas

A significant way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to replace your gas appliances and HVAC with electricity. Gas stoves can leak methane (even when turned off), not to mention carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide, which impacts children and adults with COPD and asthma. Electric and induction stoves use fewer fossil fuels and are safer than gas. They also don't require a gas line, which means lower installation costs.

Gas-powered furnaces can also risk introducing carbon monoxide into the home. They also emit flue gasses, which reduce their efficiency. While electricity is higher in price than gas right now, electric furnaces still save money through their 100% efficiency.

■ Installing an electric stove: \$360-\$1,800

■ Installing electric furnace: \$1,600-\$7,000

Life & Style

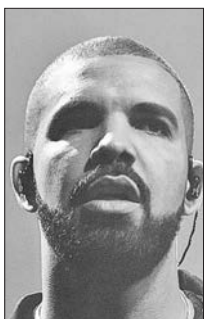
Concern over NYC police filming of people leaving Drake show

NEW YORK (AP)—Some audience members leaving a concert by Drake at a Manhattan theater came outside to see a New York Police Department officer filming those filing out, raising concerns from privacy advocates over what would be done with the footage.

The NYPD said Monday the video would only be used

for a social media post, but there were still calls for the material to be deleted.

Music writer Jon Caramanica of The New York Times posted on Twitter on Saturday night that the NYPD was filming those



Drake

leaving the show at the Apollo Theater, putting up a video showing an officer seemingly recording those coming out.

In a statement, the department said the officer was part of the social media team

for the local precinct and was getting video for a social media post about local events.

"The video will not be utilized for any other reason," the department said.

But the Surveillance Technology Oversight Project, a New York City-based group that focuses on privacy and civil rights, called the video-taping "highly concerning"

and that attendees were being surveilled without their

consent. It demanded the video be destroyed.

Fans, celebs gather at Graceland to mourn Lisa Marie Presley

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Lisa Marie Presley, a singer, songwriter and the daughter of Elvis Presley, was remembered during a funeral service Sunday as a loving mother and an "old soul" who endured tragedy but persevered as a dedicated protector of her father's legacy as a rock 'n' roll pioneer and pop icon.

More than a thousand people gathered on the front lawn of Graceland on a gray, chilly Memphis morning to mourn the death and remember the life of Lisa Marie Presley, who died Jan. 12 after she was taken to a hospital in California.

Some mourners held flowers as they waited for the service to begin under the tall trees on the lawn of Graceland, the home in Memphis where Lisa Marie lived as a child with her father. The mansion, which Lisa Marie Presley owned, has been turned into a museum and tourist attraction that hundreds of thousands of fans visit each year to celebrate the life and music of Elvis, who died in 1977 at age 42.

The property in south Memphis was a place of sadness and somber memories on Sunday. The service began with the singing of "Amazing Grace" by Jason Clark & The Tennessee Mass Choir.

"We would like to express

our heartfelt gratitude for the love, compassion and support you have shown our family during this difficult time," said a message from the Presley family written on the program for the service. "We will always be grateful."

Among those who spoke during the service were Lisa Marie's mother, actor Priscilla Presley; Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York; Jerry Schilling, a close friend of Elvis; and former Memphis Mayor A C Wharton, who called Lisa Marie's parents Memphis' royal couple and a "conduit to the throne, the keeper of the flame."

In a soft voice, Priscilla Presley read a poem from one of Lisa Marie's three daughters, Harper Vivienne Ann Lockwood, entitled "The Old Soul," in which she calls her mother "an icon, a role model, a superhero to many people all over the world."

"In 1968, she entered our world, born tired, fragile, yet strong. She was delicate, but was filled with life," Priscilla Presley read. "She always knew she wouldn't be here too long. Childhood passes by, with a glimpse of her green eye. She then grew a family of her own."

After reading the poem, Priscilla Presley said: "Our heart is broken. Lisa, we all love you."

Lorne Michaels of 'SNL' to be honored at PEN America gala

NEW YORK (AP)—This year's PEN America Literary Gala will be notable for the presence of "Saturday Night Live."

PEN, the literary and free expression organization, is giving "SNL" creator-



Michaels

sketches forever changed television and comedy."

"The political landscape wouldn't be the same without SNL to offer up a weekly skewering of a hapless cast of characters from the halls of power

in Washington—a merry time capsule of what gave us joy and jitters in moments of national exhilaration and peril," she said.

The PEN gala will be held at its longtime venue, the American Museum of Natural History, in New York.

PEN announced Monday it also will honor Ted Sarandos, Netflix's chief content officer and co-chief executive officer, who will receive the Business Visionary Award because of "the transformative impact of

Netflix on storytelling, society at large, and on book adaptations as a critical source of content."

Sarandos already is well known in the "Saturday Night Live" community: Netflix landed the 2015 coming-of-age comedy "Staten Island Summer," produced by Michaels and written by Jost.

Michaels, 78, has been overseeing SNL since it first aired in 1975, aside from a few seasons in the 1980s. The show helped launched the careers of Bill Murray, Adam Sandler, Eddie Murphy and many others stars, and has included Jost, Tina Fey and Seth Meyers among its head writers. Michaels has previously received a Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor.

"Lorne Michaels has mentored and nurtured three

generations of this country's most talented and innovative writers, shaping the voice of American comedy as it resonates the world over," Nossel's statement said. "His ability to keep his finger on our national zeitgeist for 47 years and counting makes him an unparalleled cultural icon."

Sarandos joined Netflix in 2000, and has worked on projects ranging from "House of Cards" to Martin Scorsese's epic "The Irishman," which the director has said would not have been possible without the backing of Netflix.

Sarandos' ties to "Saturday Night Live" also include a multi-picture Netflix deal with Sandler in 2015. Two years earlier, Sarandos and his wife, Nicole Avant, even purchased the Malibu home of former "SNL" performer David Spade.

Organizers said the Berlinale will pay special tribute this year to Ukraine and the protests in Iran.

The annual event takes place from Feb. 16-26.

Sean Penn's Ukraine documentary to premiere in Berlin

BERLIN (AP)—Sean Penn's film about the war in Ukraine, "Superpower," will have its world premiere at this year's

Berlin film festival, organizers said Monday.

The documentary will run outside the main competition,

which features 18 movies this year including John Trengove's "Manodrome" with Jesse Eisenberg and Adrien Brody.

Woman wants a relationship with happily married couple

DEAR ABBY: I'm a woman in my early 50s who has been through two divorces. This may make me sound like a bad person, but I'm really nice and quite conservative. I just make poor choices when it comes to men.

A few years ago, I met a woman I have become good friends with. She's happily married. She and her husband are empty nesters, like I am. We often socialize, and when we do there is definite chemistry between the three of us.

I've recently heard of the concept of a "throuple," which is consenting adults living together as any couple would, except there are three rather than two. I can't help but wonder whether my friend, her husband and I might make a good throuple. This is not a case of rushing into something. We have known each other for several years and have established trust and compatibility.

I'm nervous to bring this up because I don't want to jeopardize our friendship. I'm also scared about how deeply I feel for both of these people, and I think it's mutual. I don't like being single, and the thought of dating again gives me hives. What should I do?

FOUND THE RIGHT ONES OUT WEST

DEAR FOUND: Carefully consider which will give you worse hives. After two divorces, you are now in a position to make wiser decisions about men in the future, provided

you're willing to risk dipping your toe into the dating pool.

It's very possible that, as much as this couple likes you, they may not be enthusiastic about the idea of a throuple. Proposing what you have in mind may put a crimp in your relationship with on—or both—of them. Unless you can find a way to casually gauge their reaction to "throupling" hypothetically in the course of a conversation, allow me to share a bit of wisdom that has served me well: When in doubt—DON'T!

■■■■■

DEAR ABBY: Our daughter's husband has not bonded with their youngest child. He won't hold her or play with her, and barely acknowledges her existence. When, through therapy, our daughter learned to confront the issue, he admitted he just doesn't feel anything for the child.

In truth, he's not much more attentive to their 3-year-old. He would rather play video games than interact with his children or his wife. As far as we know, he isn't physically abusive toward the children or our daughter, but he is definitely verbally abusive.

Having been a victim of abuse myself, I am well aware that verbal abuse is just as damaging as physical abuse and, in fact, is sometimes a precursor to physical abuse. As grandparents, is there anything we can do, or must we watch these precious little girls be starved for affection from their father?

AWARE IN TEXAS

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR AWARE: While you cannot force your son-in-law to be a better parent—or husband—you CAN encourage your daughter to continue her therapy so she can become more assertive, not only for the sake of her children, but also for herself. It may give her the strength to end the marriage. In the meantime, continue to love your grandchildren and give them the positive reinforcement and all the attention they deserve so they learn what healthy relationships feel like.

■■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



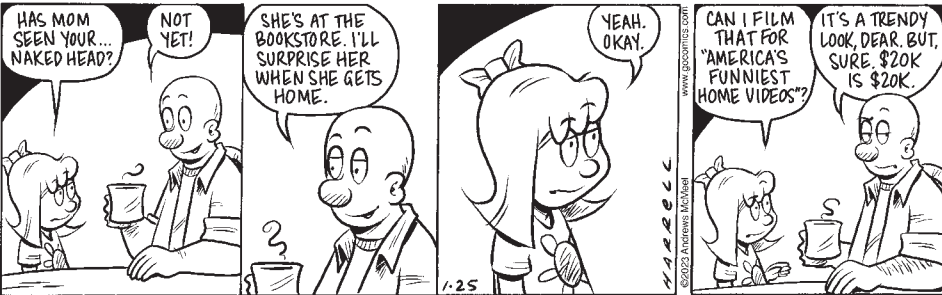
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



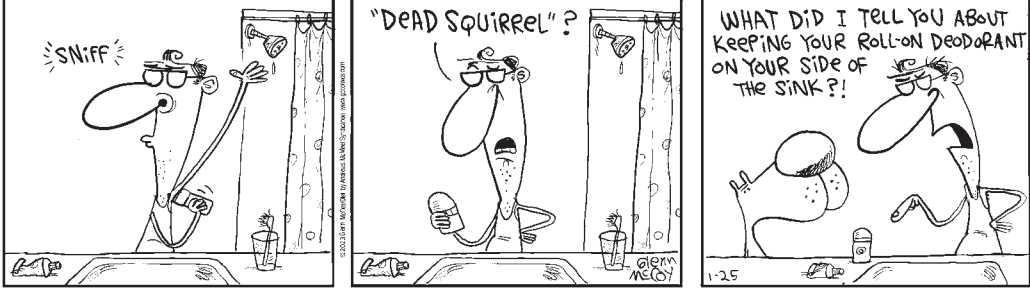
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

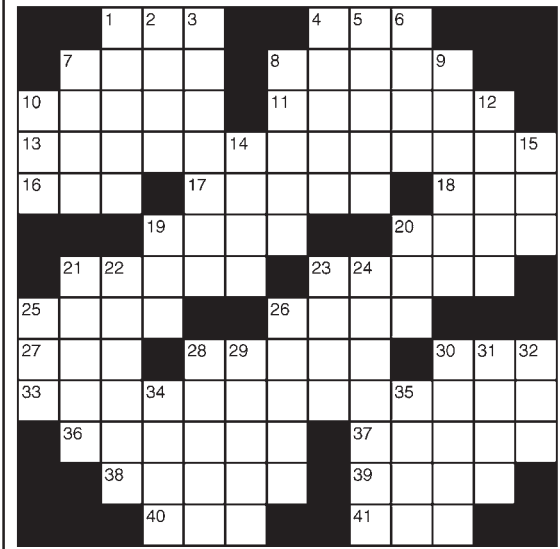
1 Tyler of "Ad Astra"
4 Favorite pal, in texts
7 — Valley, Calif.
8 Bozo, e.g.
10 Frog habitats
11 High nests
13 Story-book villain
16 Abel, to Eve
17 Fabric bundles
18 Lot vehicle
19 Downwind
20 Big name in cosmetics
21 Tennis star Monica
23 Sculptor's material
25 Bullet-proof garment

DOWN

10 Score units (Abbr.)
12 Roofing material
14 Leaves
15 Use a wok
19 Flight stat
20 Bill's partner
21 Big rigs
22 — de corps
23 "Brave New World" drug
24 Unfreeze
25 Ms. Vance, to Lucy
26 Ad awards
28 Rho follower
29 Door sign
30 Seasonal songs
31 Avenue liners
32 "Avatar" craft
34 Chew (on)
35 Gumbo veggie

Solution time: 23 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-25



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Alicia Keys, 42; Mia Kirshner, 48; Ana Ortiz, 52; Jenifer Lewis, 66.

Happy Birthday: Take a different approach to life, love and happiness. You'll discover something that captures your heart and encourages you to dedicate more time to personal growth and building a solid base that will protect you from negativity. Recognize how far you've come, and learn to love yourself and be proud of your accomplishments. Everything will fall into place. Your numbers are 5, 9, 14, 28, 33, 38, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your help will be pivotal in getting something in return. Keep up the excellent work, and don't hesitate to take what's yours. An unexpected change may daunt you at first, but the result will be better than anticipated. ☼☼☼

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Protect against injury and illness. When you need answers, go directly to the source. Summarize your options and sign up for classes or events that will broaden your outlook and help you make the most of your talents and time. ☼☼☼

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Turn on the charm, pump up the enthusiasm and make things happen. How you go about your business will interest someone who may also want to take advantage of you. Don't be too quick to give away your secrets or connections. ☼☼

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Listen and gather facts, then consider outcomes and the best way to navigate your way through turmoil. Distance yourself from anyone looking for a fight or trying to get

you to do something for their benefit. Choose love over discord. ☼☼

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Helping others will enrich your life. Physical activity, charity events and challenges will lead to acknowledgment. Being in the know will encourage others to consider you for something that will help you gain respect. Celebrate your good fortune with someone you love. ☼☼☼☼

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Uncertainty is the enemy. When in doubt, fact-check and proceed down the path that you find welcoming. Feeling good about your decisions because you did your homework will alleviate stress and encourage you to finish what you started. ☼☼☼

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Bounce your ideas back and forth before you share your thoughts with others. Take the liberty to put someone at ease by offering your services, and you'll make a significant difference to someone in need and attract positive attention. ☼☼☼

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You'll meet someone new or get the chance to do something you've never done. Participating in events that challenge and motivate you to expand your awareness or skills will also lead to a window of opportunity. ☼☼☼☼

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Size up situations quickly and keep moving. Being gullible will leave you in a compromising position. Don't get into a debate that you cannot win. Let your actions represent who you are, what you are willing to do and where you draw the line. ☼☼

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Distance yourself from manipulative, controlling people. Stick close to home and make changes that add to your comfort and help you lower your overhead. An unusual offer will tempt you. Verify the information before you commit. ☼☼☼



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't waste time. Look at a challenge to show off your skills and talents. Don't mislead others regarding money or what you are willing to contribute. A personal pick-me-up will boost your ego and encourage you to be playful with someone you love. ☼☼☼



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Search for answers. Play fairly, and don't let anger cause a feud with a friend, relative or peer. Be direct about what you are willing to do for others before you begin. Don't take part in gossip, or you'll damage your reputation. ☼☼☼



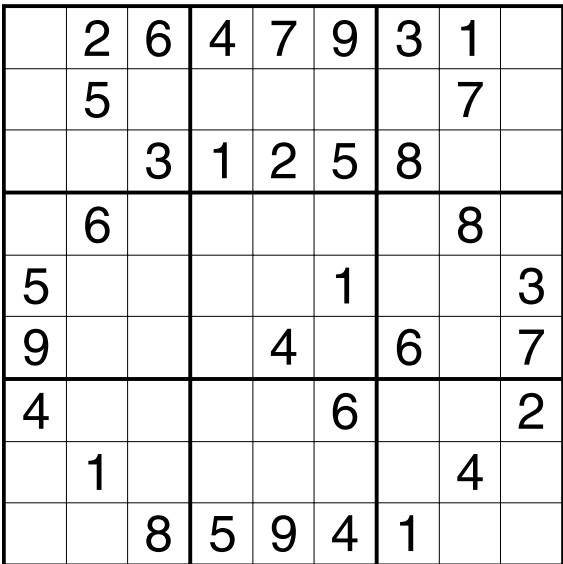
Birthday Baby: You are curious, adaptable and experimental. You are creative and mysterious.

☼: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



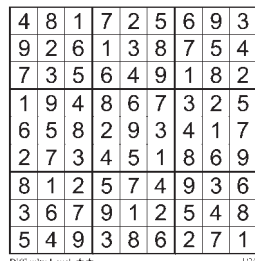
Difficulty Level ★★ ★

1/25

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★★

1/24

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

IRENE CARA (1953-2022)

Solution: 11 letters

M N N Y L F E I G G A M P M H
A A R O N V E S G C I S U M O
E E G W D L O G I N H N E E N
A F L I T V O C A U I V R S O
G N I K C O N F A T O S T C R
A K V L R Y A I A L S L O A S
L C E A K E A I L Y D S C R I E R
A A A R C G P M I F R E I L T
C R S O I E R S B A C E C R A
T T T Y O E C R P N E L A A H
I D O W V O O S A D A R N O C
C N O E C N A D H S A L F B U
A U R N X G I A L E G N A O B
S O N G W R I T E R A C M B A
F S H O R T C I R C U S E N N

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1/25

Aaron, Angela, BoBo, Bronx, Care, Charts, Coco, Conrad, Cuban, Dancer, Disco, Escalera, Fame, Film, Flashdance, Forever My Love, Galactica, Gaspar, Gold, Honors, King, Life, Live, Louise, Maggie Flynn, Magic, Music, New York, Piano, Platinum, Puerto Rican, Roots, Short Circus, Sing, Songwriter, Soundtrack, Sparkle, Stage, Vocals, Voice, Voyage

Yesterday's Answer: Arcade Game

Treasures 27, 29, 31 and 33 through 49 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Antetokounmpo scores 29 in return, Bucks top Pistons



DETROIT (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 20 of his 29 points in the first quarter, returning to the lineup after a five-game absence to lead the Milwaukee Bucks to a 150-130 win over the Detroit Pistons on Monday night.

The two-time MVP was joined by three-time All-Star Khris Middleton, putting the Bucks' prolific duo in the same lineup for the first time in more than a month.

Antetokounmpo had been out with a sore left knee. Middleton, who hadn't played since Dec. 15 due to a sore right knee, had eight points and four assists.

The Bucks scored 49 points in the first quarter, two shy of the NBA record, and led Detroit by 25 after Antetokounmpo made all six of his shots in eight-plus minutes.

Bojan Bogdanovic scored 33 points and rookie Jalen Duren had a season-high 23 points and 14 rebounds for the Pistons, who have won an Eastern Conference-low 12 games and are ahead of only Houston in the league-wide standings.

Magic 113, Celtic 98

In Orlando, Fla., Paolo Banchero scored 23 points, Jonathan Isaac played in an NBA game for the first time in 2 1/2 years and Orlando broke Boston's nine-game winning streak.

Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown scored 26 points apiece for the Celtics, who managed just three points after Tatum's 3-pointer cut Orlando's lead to 97-95 with 6:20 remaining.

Wendell Carter Jr. had 21 points and 11 rebounds for



AP Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) drives on Detroit Pistons center Jalen Duren (0) in the first half of an NBA basketball game in Detroit, Monday, Jan. 23, 2023.

the Magic. Cole Anthony came off the bench with 18 points, five rebounds and four assists.

Isaac missed 211 games since tearing his ACL in the NBA's restart at Walt Disney World on Aug. 2, 2020. He finished with 10 points, three rebounds and two steals, playing about 9 1/2 minutes.

Rockets 119, Timberwolves 114

In Houston, Jalen Green scored a career-high 42 points and Houston held on to beat Minnesota and snap a 13-game losing streak.

Green, the second overall

pick in the 2021 draft, had 21 points by halftime and kept up his strong play in the second half to lead the Rockets to their first victory since Dec. 26 at Chicago. They ended their longest skid of the season and also a 10-game home losing streak, winning at home for the first time since Dec. 13 against Phoenix.

Anthony Edwards had 31 points and D'Angelo Russell tied a season high with 30 for the Timberwolves, who had won two straight.

Bulls 111, Hawks 100

In Chicago, DeMar DeRozan scored 26 points in his

1,000th career game, Nikola Vucevic added 14 points and 17 rebounds and Chicago beat Atlanta.

The Bulls returned to Chicago after 126-108 win over the Pistons in Paris on Thursday.

Trae Young had 21 points and 13 assists, while Dejounte Murray added 20 points for the Hawks, who have lost two straight after winning five in a row.

Jazz 120, Hornets 102

In Salt Lake City, Lauri Markkanen scored 25 points and Utah beat cold-shooting Charlotte.

The Hornets made only two 3-pointers, both by Terry Rozier, the fewest by an NBA team this season. Charlotte had 16 attempts beyond the arc, shooting 12.5%, while the Jazz made 16 of 40. The previous low for Charlotte this season was five 3s, most recently on Dec. 3 at Milwaukee.

Jordan Clarkson scored 18 points and Mike Conley added 14 for the Jazz, who have won three of four.

Rozier scored 23 points and Mason Plumlee had 18 for the Hornets, who were trying to win three straight games for the first time this season.

Trail Blazers 147, Spurs 127

In Portland, Ore., Damian Lillard had 37 points and 12 assists, and Portland beat San Antonio to stop a three-game losing streak.

Jusuf Nurkic added 25 points and 11 rebounds for the struggling Blazers, who had lost eight of their previous 10 games.

Keldon Johnson scored 20 points for the Spurs, who have lost seven of their last eight games and sit second-to-last in the Western Conference standings, just above the Houston Rockets.

Kings 133, Grizzlies 100

In Memphis, Tenn., Trey Lyles scored a season-high 24 points, Harrison Barnes had 15 of his 20 in Sacramento's record-tying first quarter and the Kings beat short-handed Memphis.

The Kings tied the NBA record with 12 3-pointers in the first quarter—in just 13 attempts—and scored 47 points. But Sacramento didn't put away the game until outscoring Memphis 33-10 in the fourth quarter.

Lyles was 6 for 8 from 3-point range for the Kings (27-19), who have won seven of their last eight games.

Domantas Sabonis finished with 14 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds for his sixth triple-double of the season. Keegan Murray also finished with 20 points and De'Aaron Fox had 17 points and 10 assists.

Desmond Bane scored 21 points for the Memphis (31-16), which played without Ja Morant and Steven Adams. The Grizzlies have lost three straight following an 11-game winning streak.



MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

For a full set, Karen Khachanov's Australian Open quarterfinal against Sebastian Korda on Tuesday was as tight as can be. Right up until, that is, Khachanov unleashed a down-the-line backhand to cap a 17-shot point and steal a tiebreaker.

Khachanov raised his right index finger to his ear, telling the Rod Laver Arena crowd to let him hear some support, then wagged that finger in a "No. 1!" gesture. Not long after that, early in the second set, Korda, a 22-year-old American whose father Petr was the 1998 champion in Australia, felt pain in his right wrist when he mis-hit a forehand service return. He called for a trainer to examine and tape it.

And early in the third, it was over, because Korda stopped playing while trailing 7-6 (5), 6-3, 3-0, allowing Khachanov to reach his first semifinal at Melbourne Park—and his second consecutive trip to the final four at a Grand Slam tournament, following his run at the U.S. Open last September.

Korda stops; Khachanov into 1st Australian Open semifinal



AP Karen Khachanov, right, of Russia gestures to Sebastian Korda of the U.S. after Korda withdrew from their match with an injured wrist during their quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2023.

Soon, Khachanov was doing an on-court winner's interview, telling the spectators to offer applause for his injured opponent, while Korda was walking toward the locker room, a red equipment bag over his left shoulder and a dour look on his face.

"I kind of reinvented myself, I would say. I always believed in myself, but there are always ups and downs," said Khachanov, a 26-year-old Russian who is seeded No. 8 in Australia. "And sometimes when you have this great result, it just shows you what you are capa-

ble of and you start to believe more and more."

Korda's wrist first bothered him during a tune-up tournament in Adelaide earlier this month, but he said it seemed to be fine over the past two weeks until Tuesday.

"I kind of felt that spot that

I was feeling before," Korda said. "Some forehands, I couldn't even hold the racket. Volleying was almost impossible for me. So it was a little tough."

Earlier Tuesday, reigning Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina reached her first semifinal at Melbourne Park, beating 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko 6-2, 6-4 in a match delayed for about 20 minutes in the first set while the main stadium's retractable roof was shut because of rain.

Rybakina, who hit 11 aces to take her tournament-leading total to 35, will play Jessica Pegula or Victoria Azarenka next.

"I got all the experience at Wimbledon, and it's helping me now this time, here in Australia, and I know what to expect," said No. 22 seed Rybakina, who was born in Moscow but has represented Kazakhstan since 2018 because it offered to fund her tennis career. "For sure, it's just easier in this case."

Khachanov will face either No. 3 Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece or unseeded Jiri Lehec-

ka of the Czech Republic for a berth in the men's final. Tsitsipas and Lehecka were scheduled to play their quarterfinal Tuesday night.

Korda, who was seeded 29th, upset 2021 U.S. Open champion and two-time Australian Open runner-up Daniil Medvedev in the third round, then made it past No. 10 Hubert Hurkacz in five sets in the fourth round.

The younger Korda was one of three 20-something American men to get to the quarterfinals this time, the most for the country at the Australian Open since 2000. The other two, Ben Shelton and Tommy Paul, meet for a berth in the semifinals on Wednesday.

None of the three ever had been to the final eight at a major tournament.

"There is a lot of positives. I mean, way more positives than even negatives. Today was tough, but hopefully it's nothing serious and I can take care of it so I don't have it in the future," Korda said, referring to his wrist. "I'm going to go forward with my head high and keep working."

Prescott, Cowboys stuck in divisional-round rut another year



FRISCO, Texas (AP)—For all the progress of the first road playoff victory in 30 years, Dak Prescott and the Dallas Cowboys still can't get out of their divisional-round rut.

Now they have another year to think about it.

"They're all independent," the Dallas quarterback said after dropping to 0-3 in divisional games, almost half of the record seven consecutive losses in this round for the Cowboys.

"You can't take one from the other or think about that. But all I can think about right now is this game and how disappointed I am in my play at this point."

Prescott threw two interceptions in a 19-12 loss to San Francisco, a week after easily his best playoff performance in a victory at Tampa Bay that eliminated seven-time champ Tom Brady.

The Cowboys (13-6) have fallen short of the NFC championship game in 12 consecutive playoff appearances since winning the most recent of the five Super Bowl titles for America's Team 27 years ago.

Prescott was the problem early, but the defense was a big letdown late by allowing two long scoring drives and not getting Dallas the ball back with enough time for a realistic scoring chance.

The offseason focus, though, will be largely on



Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott (4) walks off the field after an NFL divisional round playoff football game against the San Francisco 49ers in Santa Clara, Calif., Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023.

Prescott's failures.

He went from a personal playoff-best 143.3 passer rating against the Bucs to a playoff-worst 63.6 against the Niners. His career-high 17 interceptions, playoffs included, led the NFL.

Owner/general manager

Jerry Jones remains committed to Prescott. The 2016 NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year has two years left on a four-year contract that pays \$40 million per season.

"We'll come out of here with something good out of this," Jones said. "That's an

edge. Tonight didn't change my mind about the edge with him."

MCCARTHY'S STIFF-ARM

Coach Mike McCarthy was photographed extending an arm into the lens of a TV cam-

eraman while walking off the field after the game.

The cameraman tweeted that he didn't think the coach pushed him, although the photograph made it appear he had. The cameraman said he met privately with McCarthy, who he said apologized.

Jones said the latest divisional loss didn't change his mind about McCarthy being his coach. Questions about McCarthy's job security continue despite consecutive 12-win seasons that ended with playoff trips, including last week's postseason victory.

ENDING WITH A THUD

Star running back Ezekiel Elliott and tight end Dalton Schultz might have played their final games with the Cowboys. If so, both endings left something to be desired.

Elliott was the center for a strange formation on the final play, getting run over by a defender after the shotgun snap to Prescott. Receiver KaVontae Turpin was immediately tackled before the Cowboys could start pitching the ball on a play that began 76 yards from the end zone.

Schultz inexplicably didn't get a second foot down on the catch before that play, costing the Cowboys about 15 yards of field position and preventing any realistic chance at a desperation pass.

Elliott could be cut without significant salary cap implications on the \$90 million, six-year extension he signed three years ago.

Schultz, who scored three

touchdowns in the playoffs, played on the franchise tag and appears unlikely to do so again. It probably will take a long-term contract to keep him, and the Cowboys have some expensive priorities coming in the next few years.

POLLARD'S FUTURE

Running back Tony Pollard, who emerged as the best playmaker on offense, broke his left fibula against the 49ers when he was tackled in the first half.

He was on the final year of his rookie contract, and still will be rehabbing an injury that will require surgery when free agency opens in March. Pollard might be headed for the franchise tag.

RECEIVING VOID

CeeDee Lamb had a career season in his debut as the No. 1 receiver after the offseason trade of Amari Cooper in a cost-cutting move.

The Cowboys never really did figure out how to replace Cooper, though. Before the ill-conceived final play, Noah Brown (two catches) and T.Y. Hilton (one) were the only receivers with a catch after Lamb's 10 grabs for 117 yards.

Michael Gallup, who signed a \$58 million, five-year contract last offseason, was shut out against the 49ers.

DEFENSIVE DECISIONS

Micah Parsons, an All-Pro in both of his seasons, is the anchor of a defense that led the NFL in takeaways in consecutive years. There are some questions about the supporting cast.

Linebacker Leighton Vander Esch, Dallas' first-round pick five years ago, had a strong season on a one-year contract after the Cowboys didn't pick up the fifth-year option on his rookie deal.

Fellow linebacker Anthony Barr, added as a free agent on a one-year contract in training camp, gave Dallas more flexibility in using Parsons as a pass rusher. Safety Donovan Wilson is a free agent.

KICKING QUANDARY

Brett Maher is a free agent after setting an NFL record with four missed extra-point kicks in the wild-card win over the Bucs. He had one blocked against the 49ers, but the kick looked as if it would have missed anyway. He finished the season by missing six of his last seven PATs.

It's easy to forget that Maher stabilized a shaky situation as a late add in training camp when a kicking competition flopped. Playoffs included, he was 31 of 34 on field goals (91%).

Analysis: Defense still wins in the NFL playoffs

By ROB MAADDI
AP Pro Football Writer

Defense stills wins in the playoffs.

The San Francisco 49ers and Cincinnati Bengals advanced to the conference championship games with excellent defensive performances on Sunday.

The Philadelphia Eagles also had a standout defensive effort Saturday night.

While high-flying offenses led by star quarterbacks get most of the attention, defense matters.

It was evident in the NFL divisional round this weekend.

Chiefs defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo's aggressive unit forced two turnovers in the fourth quarter, helping Kansas City beat Jacksonville 27-20 in the first game.

"We focused throughout the week, especially on the week we had off, focused on maybe punching the ball a little bit more or hop on the ball or just catching the ones that they give us," Chiefs linebacker Nick Bolton said. "I dropped one early, but it's one of those things you kind of have to keep going on, and

in playoffs, you understand that they count times two when you get them."

Jalen Hurts and the Eagles' offense were unstoppable, especially dominating the Giants on the ground with 268 yards rushing. But Philadelphia's defense, which was No. 2 in the league this season, was downright nasty in a 38-7 rout over New York.

Coming off an impressive 301-yard passing game in an upset over 13-win Minnesota, Daniel Jones had no chance against Haason Reddick and Philly's ferocious D.

Jones was sacked five times, threw a pick, completed just 55.6% of his passes and looked lost. The Eagles held the Giants to only 227 total yards.

"Jonathan Gannon puts these guys in great positions," Eagles coach Nick Sirianni said of his defensive coordinator. "Obviously, we have great players. ... But this guy is an unbelievable coordinator. ... He's going to be a head football coach in the National Football League because of what he does. This guy is a stud. He's a stud."

Cincinnati's defense had the

most impressive all-around game of all, considering its opponent. The Bengals shut down Josh Allen and Buffalo's dynamic offense in a 27-10 win. The Bills were only 4 for 12 on third downs, went three-and-out three times and managed just a field goal in the second half.

Defensive coordinator Lou Anarumo put the Bengals in position to constantly pressure Allen and knock him out of rhythm. Allen had only one turnover late in the game, but he misfired on some throws and didn't click with his receivers. Allen kept his head down and didn't look up when wide receiver Stefon Diggs approached him on the bench and yelled a few times in his direction midway through the fourth quarter.

"He wants the ball," Allen said of Diggs, who had just four receptions for 35 yards. "And whatever it was that we couldn't get him the ball tonight, we're going to have to learn from."

The Bengals will meet the Chiefs again in a rematch of last year's AFC championship game that was won by Cincin-

Dolphins, Torchbearers top bracket 2 of co-ed HS badminton

By LEIGH GASES

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REPORTER

Marianas High School Dolphins and Agape

Christian School Torchbearers tore through bracket two in the first day of round-robin games in the co-ed high school Public School System/TakeCare Badminton Interscholastic League held at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last Friday.

The Dolphins team 1 faced off with Grace Christian Academy team 1 and came out with a sweep of the boys doubles, boys singles, and girls doubles events, but fell short on the girls singles and mixed doubles for a final score of 9-6.

In their game against Kagman High School, the Dolphins regrouped quickly as they almost completely swept all events.

The Dolphins boys, consisting of Sernantie Jimenez, Brian Lubao, Ian Lubao, Daniell



Ian Lubao, left, and Kyle Salcedo from Marianas High School are seen in action during their game of the PSS/TakeCare Badminton Interscholastic League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last Saturday.

Pablo, and Kyle Salcedo, and girls including Teresa Ahn, Shemariah Hicaro, Angela Maratas, Prapti Mondal, and Abigail Robles, were perfect in the boys doubles, girls sin-

gles, girls doubles, and mixed doubles events, but missed one game in the boys singles for a final score of 14-1.

On the other courts, the Torchbearers team 2 fought

through five events against Saipan Southern High School and swept the girls singles, boys singles, and girls doubles, while they came up short on the mixed doubles

and boys doubles for a final score of 10-5.

Their last game against Saipan International School team 2 was a more resounding success as they swept four

events save for the mixed doubles for a final tally of 12-3.

After their games, the Dolphins team 1 is ahead in the bracket two standings with 23 points, while the Torchbearers team 2 is right behind with 22 points.

SSHS team 1 is third with 14 points, GCA team 1 is fourth with 13, SIS team 2 has 5 points, and KHS has 4.

Both MHS and ACS teams lead their respective brackets as in bracket one, ACS team 1 is currently tied in first place with MHS team 2—both with 27 points.

The Dolphins are coached by Leonard Manuel and the Torchbearers are coached by ACS pastor Kok H. Pang.

The schedule for the next round-robin games are this Saturday, Jan. 28, then on Saturday, Feb. 25.

The Top 2 of bracket one and bracket two round-robin semifinal games are scheduled for Saturday, March 4, while the championship game is scheduled for Saturday, March 11.

TOP

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island tournaments.

“Yeah, I’m keeping track of what I’m doing during matches. [My girlfriend] got some notes for me that I’m gonna look over later,” he said.

In other championship matches last Sunday, second seed Coby Shimizu ruled the men’s 4.0 after upsetting top seed Nason Wessel, 6-4, 6-2.

Shimizu advanced after a 6-2, 6-3 win over John Kenneth D. Casauran. He won his first round match against Minseong Kim, 6-0, 6-0.

Wessel, meanwhile, won via walkover against Ian Song in the second round before winning his semifinal match against third seed Yutaka Kadokura, 6-1, 6-3.

In mixed doubles 5.0, Hye Jin Elliot and Sam Ryu topped the compass draw tournament after going 2-0. They first beat Jeff Race and Hoo Wang, 7-5, 4-6, 10-4, before clinching the



Coby Shimizu in action against Nason Wesse in their men’s 4.0 finals game of the 2023 SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament last Sunday at the American Memorial Park.

division with a 6-7, 7-6, 10-4 comeback win over Serin Chung and David Kwon.

In the mixed doubles 3.0, Seiyul Hong and Jack Linden took the crown after surprising top seed Elizabeth and Sam Culp, 6-3, 6-3, in the finals.

Hong and Linden stamped their finals ticket after a 6-1, 6-2 win over Andrew Chung and Stephanie Kim. The

Culps, meanwhile, advanced following a hard-earned 1-6, 6-3, 11-9 win over Dev Bachani and Maya Shimizu.

Results of the women’s open and junior divisions will be published in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

The Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association helped coordinate the 2023 SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament.

out them and their trust in me as a coach, none of this would have been possible.

Sunday night was also sort of bittersweet for Naraja as later in the evening his own Gualo Rai team in the boys U18, where he’s one of the top guns, lost to Koblerville in the finals.

“Coaching these boys is already a win in itself. After the game, the boys gave me their trophy and dedicated their win to me. Although we have placed second [in the boys U18], these boys continue to inspire me to keep working harder,” he added.

In the battle for third, Oleai nipped Finasisu in a closely contested match, 49-47.

The result of the women’s finals will be published in tomorrow’s issue of *Saipan Tribune*.

Kagman 41 – Wilson 8, Defang 6, Apatang 1 6, Enriquez 4, Viola 4, Matsumoto 4, Tenorio 3, Pangelinan 2, Pineda 2, Camacho 2.

Tanapag 32 – Ansus 6, Sabino 6, Rectitud 5, Tenorio 4, Edsrelon 4, Garcia 4, Tibayan 3.

Scoring by halves: 18-12, 41-32.

MERRICK

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ed to try out playing [soccer] in Europe.”

Toves also said he will use the opportunity to play off-island to continue improving his game and represent the NMI well.

Of the two football clubs at the college—the FC RIASA/Eccleshill United FC—Toves said he will be playing for RIASA. “I really want to play and get better to the point I could play for a professional soccer team in England.”

Both football clubs play in the Northern Counties East Football League which is a semi-professional English football league with two divisions (Premier Division and Division One). The league has over 40 club members.

Toves said will be using his time there getting college experience, getting a bachelor’s degree and a sports management

degree, and at the same time preparing himself mentally and physically for the sport.

He said he will then bring back what he learned and share it with the youth in Saipan after his college career.

With this new journey, Toves said “I am feeling alright and excited. [It’s a] new environment that I have to get used to [along with] meeting new people.”

The Mount Carmel School alumnus then thanked everyone who has supported him. “I want to say thank you to all my friends and family for believing in me and for giving me advice on what to expect in college. I want to say thank you to my mom and dad for helping me with my college and making me prepare myself for my future.”

Toves is part of a growing pool of more than 10 NMI men’s soccer players who have played in the collegiate league.

Last September, Toves was part of the NMI U20 Men’s

National Soccer Team made up of 23 players that competed in the Asian Football Confederation U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Amman, Jordan

His mom, Catherine Attao-Toves, said in a Facebook post after his farewell party, “Thank you family and friends for your support and celebrating Merrick’s new chapter in Richmond International Academic and Soccer Academy, Leeds, England. We are grateful for your blessings! May our Lord bless each of you.”

“My son. Although I already miss you so much, my heart is filled with gratitude and excitement. We are excited for this path you have chosen, this new beginning. Remember to always keep your faith, trust and hope for our Lord is with you every step of the way. Spiritually, we will be there in the stands with our signature gesture, cheering you on! Keep your head up, and give it your all! Love you so much...” she said.



Merrick Toves, seated in red, with his mom, Catherine Attao-Toves, along with family members, and Kanoa FC, Matansa FC, and Tan Holdings FC members during his farewell party.

KAGMAN

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told them that there is a reason why they are in the championship. They have put in countless hours on and off the court, so I know that they are the best 13U team out here. They are all great kids and players, and I know that they are capable of doing anything just as long as they put their mind to it.”

Lastly, Naraja dedicated the boys U13 crown to his players’ parents.

“They have been a source of support for the players. With-

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Antetokounmpo
scores 29 in return,
Bucks top Pistons

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Dolphins,
Torchbearers top
bracket 2 of co-ed
HS badminton

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Top seed Ramsey is men's open champ

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Colin Ramsey justified his top ranking in the men's open by beating Thomas Abel in straight sets to win the championship of the 2023 SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament last Sunday at the American Memorial Park.

The 23-year-old breezed past the second seeded Abel in the opening match, 6-2, but encountered some turbulence in the second where Abel broke his serve.

Ramsey eventually pulled it together and prevailed, 6-4, to add another first place trophy to his already stacked trophy case.

The men's team gold medalist in the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 advanced to the finals after a 7-5, 6-4 win over rising star David Kwon.

Abel, for his part, booked his finals ticket following a 6-2, 6-2 victory over young-

ster June Yu.

Ramsey admitted that he underestimated Abel going into their championship match.

"It was a bit rough. I know Thomas is a great player. I also know he isn't practicing. So I felt like I kind of underestimated him in that regard. But he showed me that he can come out and contend and I can never count anybody out. It was a good match."

Ramsey and Abel were ob-

served talking back and forth during the championship match and Ramsey said it's all part of playing tennis.

"It's just two friends talking. He likes to think it's mind games, but it's all good fun," said Ramsey, who dedicated his championship "to the game of tennis."

Ramsey added that winning the 2023 SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament is part of his training for future off-

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MARK RABAGO
Colin Ramsey in action against Thomas Abel in the championship of the 2023 SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament last Sunday at the American Memorial Park.

Merrick leaves for football academy in England

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER



NMI National Team pool player Merrick Toves left for Richmond

International Academic and Soccer Academy—an association football academy based in Leeds, England last Saturday.

The 18-year-old, who played goalie for the national team and played on the Kanoa Football Club, is excited for his new collegiate and soccer journey.

He is studying coaching and sports management at the college and chose it because of its nine-month soccer program, in which Toves said "I want-

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Kagman beats Tanapag to claim boys U13 title



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Kagman boys 13 division team poses with Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation and Tan Siu Lin Foundation officials after winning the championship of the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League last Sunday night at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Center.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Kagman won the championship of the boys 13 division of the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League after topping Tanapag, 41-32, last Sunday night at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Center.

In a battle of the Top 2 seeds in the division, Kagman took the initiative early and led 18-12 after the first 20 minutes of action and never looked back.

Liam Wilson led the champions with 8 points with Danny Defang and David Apatang ably supporting him with 6 points apiece.

Runner-up Tanapag was

paced by the 6 points each of Biboy Sabino and Hanz Ansus.

Kagman coach Leo Naraja tipped his hat to his boys for working hard to win the boys U13 championship.

"I believe that our hard work and determination was the key to our championship win. Being alongside Joe Diaz as an assistant coach in the past, I have learned the many do's and don'ts. So being here in the championship, I knew that there was no room for mistakes. We made sure to take advantage of the mismatches and the deep bench we have. With our many defensive, offensive,

and all-around players, every lineup had to go according to plan," he said.

Naraja said being new in the sport, the boys U13 Kagman team was understandably nervous coming into the title game against Tanapag.

"One thing I took note of before the game was to reassure the team that feeling nervous is part of the process. The moment they step on that court, focus on only you, your team, and the game itself. To not worry about the crowd or what others have to say, because they are the ones who are playing in the game. I

See KAGMAN on Page 19



Merrick Toves, left, seen here playing in the 2019 NMIFA Youth Spring League, left for Leeds, England last weekend where he will enroll at the Richmond International Academic and Soccer Academy.